"CHUMS OF HICKORY BEND" A GREAT STORY FOR BOYS NEXT WEEK

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A SIREN OF THE TRAIL.

Telling How Certain Knights of the Pampas Rescued a Maiden, Recovered a Bag of Diamonds and Hoisted the Gang of One Gentle Jimmie.

By MARO O. ROLFE.

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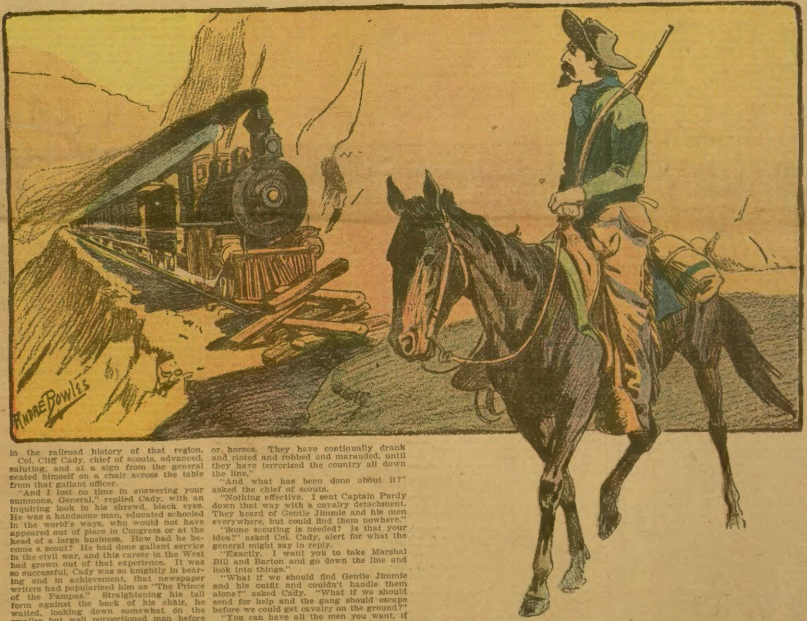
CHAPTER I.

THE TRAINWRECKERS.

"I sent for you, Chief Cady, on a matter of the first importance," said General Barnard, commandant at Fort Risley, in southern Kansas, one beautiful spring morning early in the railroad history of that region.



Col. Cliff Cady, chief of scouts, advanced, saluting, and at a sign from the general seated himself on a chair across the table from that gallant officer.

"And I lost no time in answering your summons, General," replied Cady, with an inquiring look in his shrewd, black eyes. He was a handsome man, educated schooled in the world's ways, who would not have appeared out of place in Congress or at the head of a large business. How had he become a scout? He had done gallant service in the civil war, and this career in the West had grown out of that experience. It was so successful, Cady was so knightly in bearing and in achievement, that newspaper writers had popularized him as "The Prince of the Pampas." Straightening his tall form against the back of his chair, he waited, looking down somewhat on the smaller but well porportioned man before him.

"It's about those desperadoes down the line," exclaimed the general. "They're literally raising the Old Harry!"

"You mean Gentle Jimmie's gang?"

"Yes, Cady."

"They must be a bad lot, General. What are they up to now? You know I've just got in from the long scout that Piper came ahead to give you details of, while Barton and I struck a final decisive blow to the enemy. I have heard no news from down the line for more than two weeks—nothing since Gentle Jimmie and his crowd cleaned up the pay car at Siddal's Siding."

"Well, Cady, the gang's been busy ever since. Why, not a day has passed without their commiting one depredation or another. They derailed a train at Rimwell. They tore down the telegraph line beyond Sexton. They robbed the depot safe at Baltimo. They cracked the bank at Ames. They set fire to a saloon building and burned up half of Wulmart. They have held up everyone who has come in their way with money or horses. They have continually drank and rioted and robbed and marauded, until they have terrorized the country all down the line."

"And what has been done about it?" asked the chief of scouts.

"Nothing effective. I sent Captain Purdy down that way with a cavalry detachment. They heard of Gentle Jimmie and his men everywhere, but could find them nowhere."

"Some scouting is needed? Is that your idea?" asked Col. Cady, alert for what the general might say in reply.

"Exactly. I want you to take Marshal Bill and Barton and go down the line and look into things."

"What if we should find Gentle Jimmie and his outfit and couldn't handle them alone?" asked Cady. "What if we should send for help and the gang should escape before we could get cavalry on the ground?"

"You can have all the men you want, if you want any?" said the general, deferentially.

Cady laughed.

"You know I don't want any," he said.

"So I thought. With you, a scout, it is a still hunt."

The Prince of the Pampas nodded.

"I see," said General Barnard, thoughtfully. "I am considering sending men down there three days behind you, Cady. If they get to you too late or too soon for effective work at the drop of the hat, you can plan a campaign according to circumstances. You will be likely by that time to have Gentle Jimmie carefully located. The officer in command of the men will have strict orders to adopt any scheme you may suggest. How will that do?"

"Capitally, General!" exclaimed the chief of scouts.

"So be it, then. When can you start?"

"Right away, so far as I am concerned. Bill Piper, ex-marshal of Bolton City and other cities, and Old Dick Barton and his steed, Windsplitter, are not likely to ask for delay. Marshal Bill would like to help in the undoing of Gentle Jimmie, and Old Dick has long had a grudge against Captain Stabb, one of the outlaw chief's most trusted lieutenants. I can see plenty of fun in this assignment."

"Fun? Fighting, you mean."

"All the same—or so Marshal Barton would say," replied Cady. "If you have no further instructions, I'll hunt them up. This is the sort of job in which I could make Night Eye useful. Somehow, men like Gentle Jimmie and Captain Stabb are not suspicious of an Indian. You see, so few Indians are good, so many of them are bad, that the chances for chumming between a white robber and an Indian when they chance to meet are exceedingly favorable."

"I sent Night Eye out South last night. He will be here some time today. I will hurry him along after you, if you want him. Drop in here just before you start—I may think of something else."

"All right, General."

It did not take Cady long to find his two trusted comrades of the trail. Barton was telling a story to a group of troopers and Marshal Bill was encouraging him with timely and well-put expressions of disbelief. Before the laugh that followed the conclusion of the yarn had subsided, Cady had informed the two scouts as to what was ahead of them.

"Best thing in a thousand years," whispered Marshal Bill.

Barton whooped and began to execute a Kiowa war dance; but, while he thus excited the curiosity of his soldier friends, he carefully refrained from saying a word that would in the slightest degree satisfy it.

Not a cavalryman there but knew that something of importance was coming soon; but every one of them knew that it would be useless to question either of the three scouts.

"Good luck to ye, boys!" more than one of the soldiers cried out as later, the trio rode off, many heads were shaken wisely; and when the troopers assembled for their daily drill, just outside the west wall of the fort, a prediction that something would soon be doing, was passed from group to group.

"We'll ride together without any attempt at concealment, at least as far as Baxter's Bluff," said Cady. "Almost anyone we meet this side of there will be likely to know us, anyway. That's about as near Fort Risley as Gentle Jimmie or any member of his gang will venture. We'll feed there and give Night Eye a start on the catch up."

"Gentle Jimmie, indeed!" sneered Marshal Bill Piper. "He's gentle only in name. Though he isn't a big man—about the size of Dick, here—when he speaks he howls like a wolf and half of his words are cusses. He's killed so many men unnecessarily that sometimes I've thought he murdered for pastime. When I got that lump of lead into him and chased him up Gorgas Gulch, I thought I had him sure. How he escaped me I can't guess unless the devil himself helped him. Afterwards I thought the shot I gave him had finished him and he had died somewhere among the rocks; but in time, if accounts are true, he turned up, here and there, as lively and as mean as ever. I wish I knew this trip down the line would bring us to see the end of his career."

"I've never been pitted against him," said Col. Cliff Cady, reining in his big, bay stallion as he approached a rocky place on the trail. "But I've heard so much of his doings and those of his right-hand man, Captain Stabb, that I naturally want to deal them a knock-out blow if I can."

"Cap'n Stabb! Wha, thar, Windsplitter!" cried Old Dick, jerking at the rein of his bony sorrel horse, in order to dodge Marshal Bill's white cavalry horse, which was edging too near the old trailer for safety.

"Cap'n Stabb!" he went on. "That chap 'ud give his life for Gentle Jimmie any day in the week! Pards, I never seen sech a devoted villain!"

"Gentle Jimmy must have him mesmerized," ventured Marshal Bill.

"Once Jimmie caught me, an' Stabb was told off to do for me," Barton continued. "He put me, unharmed, in a pit with the biggest b'ar I ever seen, and they rode on and left me, trustin' the rest o' the job to the b'ar. I got upon a ledge o' rock jest out o' reach o' the brute. After awhile an awful thunder an' lightnin' storm come up an' the water run into the pit an' loosened the ledge I was on an' I slid down alongside o' the b'ar."

"A tight fix!" commented Col. Cady.

"Yes, siree! But presently I didn't know nothin', an' when I come out bright ag'in the rain was over an' the b'ar lay beside me, killed by lightnin'. I never knew whether the fluid struck me, too; but anyhow I got off better'n the b'ar. I s'pose Cap'n Stabb thinks to this day that the animile made meat o' me. Sometime," Dick finished in a dry way that made his comrades laugh, "I'm goin' to change his mind."

It was late in he afternoon when the scouts arrived at Baxter's Bluff. There, tethering their horses, they prepared a palatable meal for themselves.

Col. Cady thought Night Eye ought to have overtaken them by that time, but the Indian had not put in an appearance, nor had he come when they were ready to resume the trail; but, feeling certain that he would join them when they should be in camp for the night, they went on without him.

Thus far they had no adventure worthy of note. They had met no suspicious character. To the right of them had been the railroad, and two trains had passed them, one bound up, the other down the line. Consulting a time-table and his watch—a valuable gold one that had been given him by Custer as a souvenir of a historic fight—the chief of scouts concluded that another up-train was about due there.

"The Skyline Cutter ought to pass here inside of fifteen minutes, if she's on time," he said. "Let's ride on round that bend and through that bolt of timber and see how things are shaped up ahead of us."

"There's a deep cut not far beyond the timber," answered Bill Piper, spurring ahead.

Dick Barton said nothing. He had all he could do to restrain Windsplitter. The horse's racing spirit having been aroused by the activity of his companions, he was bent on cutting in ahead of both of them.

They got through the timber, and as Piper had said, there was a cut right down the line, and Col. Cady could see that it was both long and deep. The trail led up over the high bank at the left.

As the scouts were about to guide their horses away from the track and up the bank, the muffled report of a firearm fell upon their ears. Its peculiar tone warned Cady that it had not been fired exactly in the open, and a conviction came to him that it had been fired in the cut.

"Some deviltry!" he muttered. "Section hands don't fire guns along the track."

"What d'ye make o' that?" asked Barton.

"Suspicious!" whispered Marshal Bill.

"That's a warning, fired by a sentinel near the end of the cut—a warning of our approach or the approach of some one else—to some one further along in it," replied Cady. "Piper, you ride over the bluff to the other end of the cut, Barton, you go up to the top and spy down into the cut. I'll look to this end of it. We'll soon know what's going on!"

It was not long before the scouts made a startling discovery. Col. Cady made it first, then Barton made it, then Marshal Bill, for reasons that will be obvious to those who remember the orders of the chief of scouts, given just before they separated.

There was a gang of masked train wreckers in the cut. They had obstructed the track with a railroad tie. The Skyline Cutter was approaching from below. Marshal Bill and Barton both saw the oncoming train. Cady heard it. He could do nothing where he was.

With a clarion-like shout to his big bay stallion, he dashed up the acclivity, meaning to join Piper at the lower end of the cut.

It was a race against time! It was a race against life and death!

Gladly would Col. Cady, Bill Piper and Old Dick have attacked the train wreckers, regardless of the great numerical odds against them, for there were more than a score of the masked villains; but there was no time for that.

The tie was on the track!

The train must be stopped and saved!

As he rode at breakneck speed over the bluff through which the railroad cut had been made, the chief of scouts saw that Barton had dismounted and, having secured Windsplitter, was creeping, rifle in hand, toward the height overlooking the train wreckers.

CHAPTER II.

THE RED FLAG OF DANGER.

Col. Cliff Cady smiled when he thought what effective work that old sharpshooter, Dick Barton, could do from such a point of vantage; and, riding on, he heard two shots behind him and laughed as he pictured to himself the surprise with which the train wreckers were probably looking upon two of their number dead or wounded.

The big bay stallion bore the chief of scouts onward like a feather driven before the wind. Cady had reached the highest point on the bluff and was straining his eyes in an endeavor to see what was beyond, when he heard the spang of a revolver and the hiss of a missile that cut the air close to his left ear.

In the rear was an enemy, seeking his life.

One shot had missed him. The next might be better aimed.

The colonel gripped a big revolver. There was a click as he adjusted a tiny mirror that was hinged to its stock. Up went the gun almost against his face—then it spoke.

In the bit of glass before his eye, Cady saw a masked pursuer reel and plunge from his horse.

"One train wrecker less!" thought the scout. "Good thing I picked him off just when I did, or he might have surprised Barton. So far, things are moving well."

Satisfying himself that no one else pursued him, he gave himself up to the excitement of anticipation as his steed thundered down the side of the broad bluff.

The two minutes that he consumed in getting in sight of Marshal Bill were as long as any two minutes that he could have remembered off-hand.

He saw Piper on the track, signaling the train with his hat.

It was evident that the engineer meant to ignore the signal. Col. Cady saw that Marshal Bill realized this; but he saw also that the scout resolved to leave nothing undone that he could do to save the train, its crew and its passengers, was frantically continuing his efforts.

"Only a red signal will stop the train," thought the chief of scouts. "Piper doubtless thinks so too, but perhaps he has nothing of that color with him. I have, though—thank God!"

There was a hard pull on the bridal reins. The bay stallion reared back on his hind legs. Cady slipped to the ground. The horse came down on all fours on the trail and stood there, stock still, as he had been trained to do. The scout, grasping a gaudy handkerchief in one hand, a shooter in the other, half crouched as he glided swiftly toward the brink of the cut.

Marshal Bill had not seen him. The trainmen must have seen Piper's signal, but they were not heeding it. Just as Cady, taking note of these things, was about to swing his red handkerchief on the breeze, he heard the sharp crack of a revolver below him.

Peering over into the cut, the scout saw one of the masked robbers making ready to fire at Piper, whom, evidently, he had just missed and who, as evidently, was not aware of his peril.

Without an instant's hesitation, Cady shot the train wrecker just as the latter was about to pull trigger.

As the villain dropped in a heap on the track, the chief of scout's red flag of danger, crimsoned the air far above him.

There was a sharp whistle. The oncoming engine was reversed and with an awful shock the train stopped.

Marshal Bill saw it come to a standstill and then, turning, saw Cady beckoning to him from the high brink of the cut.

Soon, mounted on his white cavalry horse, he was beside the Prince of the Pampas, who had remounted.

"Now that we've stopped the Skyline Cutter," cried Cady, "we can't do anything more just here. Let's join Barton. Some shots from his way have made me think he's had some fun that we've missed."

As the two men rode back by the way they had come, they heard two shots, the second much louder than the first.

"He's close by now," Marshal Bill jolted out. "Down there to the right, Cady!"

They quickly dismounted beside Barton, who, watching the effect of a shot that he had made just as they reached him, cried out sharply:

"I've lopped four of them off the branch for keeps and I've got three more of 'em kickin' down there! I don't see anyone that looks like Cap'n Stabb. What cussed luck!"

"But I see a man about the size of Gentle Jimmie," Piper hoarsely whispered. "Watch me try my luck with him!"

He shot at a figure of medium stature that was gesticulating as if giving orders to the train wreckers, and the scouts saw it put a shapely hand to its ear and take it down, soiled with blood.

"You pinked him—that's all," said Cady, coolly firing into the midst of the masked men, who were now scattering to seek the protection of the steep side of the cut.

One of the outlaws dropped, and an instant later, Dick Barton's rifle barked and the last of the rascals who was a fair mark fell dead in the ditch beside the track.

"There must be a dozen of them left," growled Old Dick, as the train wreckers disappeared from view. "I wish we could tip the bluff over on 'em! See there! The train crew's workin' at the tie on the track. Before they git it off, them critters may give 'em the worst of it, or try to."

"You may be safely depended upon to give a good account of yourselves up here," said Cady. "I'll go down in the cut and tell the railroad folks, so far as I can, what was shaped up for them, for of course they have a very hazy notion about it all."

Mounting, he rode back down the side of the bluff to the point where Piper had tried to stop the train. Thence, he spurred up the track till he reached half a hundred passengers and trainmen, grouped about the tie that had lain across the rails, so firmly fastened there that it had only just been removed, and not without considerable difficulty.

Some of the railroaders and not a few of the passengers knew the chief of scouts by sight and so well established was his reputation as a friend in need that as he dismounted he was hailed as the savior of the train and all on board.

"I suppose some of the credit belong to me," he said, modestly, "but I assure you that I am entitled to no great part of it. The rascals who planned your destruction have been driven off, and of course you're safe for the rest of the run."

"They meant to throw us off the track," said the engineer.

"That's plain enough," replied the conductor.

"It would have been awful! Awful" cried one of the passengers, an elderly man whose garb and speech proclaimed him an easterner.

"It certainly would have been," assented Cady. "Conductor, what have you on board today, that those wretches wanted? Any large shipment of cash or bullion?"

"Nothing of the kind, though one that we expected was delayed. I suppose it's some of the work of Gentle Jimmy and his gang."

"Doubtless," was Col. Cady's reply. "I was sent out with some other scouts to look him up, and here, quite unexpectedly, we came upon what we believe to be a part of his outfit."

"And it was luck for us all that you did," said the man who had spoken before. "Think of it, Col. Cady! My daughter is back there in one of those parlor cars. She and I and all the others might have been killed here in this cut!"

"I am glad that my comrades and I were able to help you all at such a time," replied the chief of scouts, bowing with courtly grace.

He did not think it strange that this man had considered his daughter and himself before others. He did not doubt that the others were thinking of themselves and their own flesh and blood and of their companions in peril in about the same order. That was only natural and human. It could scarcely be called selfish.

"Here, Col. Cady, is my card," continued the man, thrusting a small square of pasteboard into the scout's hand. The plainsman read:

"C. N. Chidester, New York."

He recognized the name of a man then powerful in Wall Street.

"I have heard much about you," said Chidester, who was a handsome, gray-bearded man of opulent appearance. "I have heard of you often. General Sherman has told me of some of your exploits, which it seems are pretty well known in our army circles. I am proud to meet you and would be glad at any time to serve you in any possible manner."

"And doubtless you have heard of my comrades in this venture today—Marshal Bill Piper and that old scout, Dick Barton," suggested Cady, who could not accept this man's gratitude unless it included his two trusty side partners.

"Many times, and I should like to shake hands with them on account of what they have done for me and mine—for all of us on that train! Will that be possible, Col. Cady?"

"Perhaps, if the train does not go too soon."

"Let us hope it may be so!" cried the millionaire, grasping the hand of the Prince of the Pampas. "At least,, you will come back with me and permit my motherless daughter to thank you. She's young—only nineteen—and this is her return on her first trip across the continent. She has no idea of the danger that we were all in, and for that matter I suppose none of the folks back there has."

Cady would have refused, but Chidester insisted so strongly that at length he assented, and, leading his bay steed, he walked with the financier back down the track.

They were followed by all who had gathered in the cut, each of them, to a man, eager to thank the brave scouts who, at the peril of their own lives, had saved the train that day.

As the scout and his companion approached the locomotive, they met Marshal Bill and Old Dick, who, holding their horses by their bridles, blushingly received the praises of the passengers and the train crew for their part in the salvation of the Skyline Cutter.

"We're glad you scouts laid several of Gentle Jimmie's men to rest," remarked the conductor, earnestly.

"And we're mournin' because we let so many on 'em git away," was the old trailers' doleful reply. "That's a trouble we have at the end o' most ev'ry scrimmage."

"You'll make these good people think us very blood thirsty," laughed Cady. "Of course we like to come off victorious, but we don't plan to take the life of every man who opposed us. You'd lose a lot of fun, old pard, if in a single day we should wipe out all the enemies of law and order that we are to go after in time to come. I think if that should ever come to pass, I'd see Old Dick dying of the blues."

" 'Twould be purty slow livin'," assented Barton, his face lengthening at thought of an existence so idle and so spiritless. " 'Twould, for a fact, gents!"

Mr. Chidester now asked Piper and Barton to go with the chief of scouts and himself through the train.

"There are people there who will be glad to meet you," he said.

"But they won't meet yours truly!" retorted Old Dick, backing up. "I ain't no s'ciety man, and don't want to ride on no cyars as long as my Windsplitter here lasts—and I reckon he's good for about twenty-five years yet."

"Our chief will do the honors for us," protested Marshal Bill Piper "There's no danger of his ever taking any credit that don't belong to him."

"I've learned that already, short as has been my personal acquaintance with him," rejoined the millionaire. "Gentlemen, I thank you for my daughter and myself and for everyone who came aboard the Skyline Cutter who isn't here to speak for herself or himself."

He shook hands with Barton and Marshal Bill and, seizing Cady's arm, dragged him back alongside the train, the chief of scouts leaving the bridle rein of his bay stallion in Dick's grasp.

"Hurry!" said the conductor, joining them as they passed the forward express car. "I want the passengers to have the honor of a visit from Col. Cady, but we must pull-out within five minutes—we've lost a good deal of time."

The millionaire led the scout through coach after coach, introducing him to everybody and quickly giving all an idea of the peril from which Cady and his comrades had saved them. But before they fully realized how much they owed to the big, handsome plainsman and his men, he had passed on, and thus he was saved much embarrassment.

At length Chidester paused before a woman who sat alone in a section of one of the Pullmans.

"Where is Coral?" he asked, not without some anxiety, for the events of the last half hour had made him nervous.

"She went with the lady who laid this letter on the seat besides me," answered the maid, for such she was. "She said you had sent for Miss Chidester to join you outside."

"I sent for her? No, I did not. There is something queer about this, Col. Cady! A lady! A letter!" gasped the financier.

He ripped open a flimsy, yellow envelope which contained a single sheet of cheap, white paper, on which some one had scrawled with a lead pencil:

"Mr. Chidester will get his daughter after Gentle Jimmie gets thirty thousand dollars!"

CHAPTER III.

A SURPRISE IN THE DARKNESS.

From the somewhat different points of view of millionaire Chidester and Col. Cady, the story that the maid of Miss Coral Chidester had to tell was a startling one.

The Prince of the Pampas was deeply interested in it as was the missing young woman's father. It appealed to his love of mystery, to his chivalry and to his warm human sympthy. Still he was slow to understand it.

It was not a long story, but to Mr. Chidester it was a harrowing one and to Cady it was a surprising and suggestive one.

A woman, not bad looking and approaching middle age, who was covered from her neck to the aisles of the Pullman with a long, flowing wrap of black rain-cloth, had appeared before the maid and Miss Chidester and, addressing the latter, had said abruptly and convincingly:

"Miss Chidester, I believe? Well, there's been an attempt by train wreckers to derail the train. They thought there was a goodly cargo of gold on board, but there was a slip somewhere. The attempt has been frustrated in some way. There is much to be seen outside that is interesting. Your father is up the track, with a lot of other people, and he wants me to bring you to him, if you would like to come with me."

By this time her tones had become deferential, and without any hesitation the young woman rose and accompanied her.

"And why didn't you go with Coral?" Chidester sharply asked the maid.

"I offered to go with her, but she thought I would better stay here and keep an eye on her belongings."

"So she took nothing with her?"

"Only her purse and her jewel bag—you know she always keeps those with her. About a minute after they left me the woman came back and dropped that note on the seat beside me."

"Come outside, Mr. Chidester," suggested Cady. "We are accomplishing nothing here. It may not have become a very serious matter as soon as this. The strange woman cannot have taken your daughter far by this time. Surely we can rescue her, if indeed she is a prisoner."

"All aboard!" shouted some one on the platform of the Pullman.

"Perhaps the conductor will hold the train a few minutes!" cried Mr. Chidester, anxiously.

"Certainly he will, in a case like this," was the reassuring answer of the chief of the scouts. "I'll attend to that."

They saw nothing of Miss Chidester and her companion either beside the train or up or down the track.

"Perhaps they're in one of the forward coaches," suggested the conductor, a little impatiently. "The young lady could not have been spirited away in broad daylight so seasily as all that."

But a search of the coaches was fruitless.

"I should like to hold the train longer, but I cannot," said the conductor. "There is no way here to telegraph and an accident of some kind might result from further delay. You see how I'm fixed, Colonel."

The chief of scouts nodded. He was too much perplexed to talk just then. But light

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was coming to him, and nothing hopeful was coming with it.

Some passengers who had remained on the train while others were in the cut, where the outlaws had obstructed the track, had seen two women on horseback, one of them young and pretty and evidently excited, ride up the roadbed a little distance, then suddenly turn to the south and dash away across the prairie, the elder of the two gripping the other's bridle rein.

"If anything like that has been going on around here, likely Marshal Bill and Old Dick saw something of it," said Cady to Chidester, as reasuringly as he could speak. "Conductor, as a special favor to me, wait just a few minutes longer," he added. "I will hurry."

The conductor nervously acquiesced, and Cady ran up the track to where Piper and Barton were awaiting him.

"Yes, we seen the two women, they went south, jest as you've been told they did," answered Barton.

"When did they get away?" asked the chief of scouts.

"It was before you and the others came down the track from the cut," replied Marshal Bill.

"That's why it was possible!" exclaimed the colonel.

"We thought little of their going away from the train in the way they did," Piper continued. "Women ride round on the prairies in these parts about where and when they please, if they have horses, you know. For all we know, they lived down yonder somewhere and had come out to see what was the matter with the train. All people are more or less curious and it isn't likely any train ever stopped here before. Of course we knew nothing of Mr. Chidester then."

"And less about his fair darter," added Old Dick.

Cady rejoined Mr. Chidester, who met him with a white face, full of apprehension.

"I have tried to hope that this affair was some mistake—even a joke," said the chief of scouts; "but it is a very serious matter. I could not believe that the band of train wreckers, known as Gentle Jimmie's gang, after having been driven off in the cut, could pull off such an outrage as this. One reason why it was hard for me to accept such a theory was the appearance in the case of this woman. I have not heard of the hand of any woman in their doings until today. Looking the trouble squarely in the face, I am inclined to believe that your daughter has been abducted by Gentle Jimmie and will be held for ransom."

"What is to be done?" asked the millionaire.

"All will depend on circumstances. The right thing must be done—nothing rash or ill-advised must be done. Your daughter's life may depend on that. As this affair drops right into the work that my fellow scouts and I were sent to do, I am able to offer our services to you in your hour of trouble."

"And they shall be well repaid," the rich man hastened to assure him.

"We are paid for our time by the war department. We are paid to run down and bring to justice the perpetrators of such deeds as this," said Cady, a little stiffly. "However successful we may be, you will owe us nothing. At the same time, I can promise you nothing except out best endeavors to do our duty."

Now the conductor appeared, unwillingly interrupting them with an announcement that he knew would add to their perplexity.

"Gentlemen," he said, "the train must go."

With characteristic decision, Cady planned quickly, and in these terse sentences he addressed the New Yorker:

"You can do no good remaining here. Go on as far as Kansas City. Wait there with what patience you can command till you hear from me. I may be remote from the wire and unable to send you any word for some days."

"But I—How can I——?"

"You could not help in the rescue of your daughter. There will be danger and hardships. You might lose your life. Get on the train now, but tell me at what hotel I can address you. Will you do as I suggest?"

The conductor added his persuasion to that of Col. Cady.

"It's no job for a tenderfoot," he argued. "If your daughter can be restored to you, Col. Cliff Cady, Marshal Piper and Old Dick Barton may be entrusted with the job. If they fail to do it, you may be sure no one else could have done it."

Others backed up the conductor in this representation, and as the train pulled out, Millionaire Chidester stood on the rear platform of the last car, very pale, but waving his white hands hopefully and gratefully to Cady, Piper and Barton.

When the Skyline Cutter had passed out of view through the cut, the three scouts faced each other questioningly. Col. Cady was the first of the trio to break silence:

"All trails seem to lead to Gentle Jimmie," said he. "I've promised that man that we'll restore his girl to him, alive and unharmed, if we can."

"And that's what we'll do," said Piper.

Old Dick sprang on Windsplitter's back.

"Let's git at it," he said. "I hope one o' them trails 'll lead me to Cap'n Stabb."

"Likely one of them will," was Cady's answer. "We must pick up the trail of those two horses that the women rode off, and we must do it before night settles down. It might not be so easy in the morning. If Night Eye gets down this way, he'll follow on till he overtakes us. Ride ahead, comrades, to where you saw the women making off across the prairie."

The trail of the two horses was soon found and easily followed. When night came on, it had led the three scouts miles across the prairie and into a stretch of timber land.

There they camped for the night.

Having cared for their horses, supped and smoked, they planned to keep watch, turn and turn, during the night, and Col. Cady and Barton lay down at a little distance from where they had had their campfire, leaving Marshal Bill on guard. In two hours, Old Dick relieved Piper, and two hours later, Cady relieved Barton.

There was no moon, and it was dark in the timber; not so dark, however, but that good-sized objects could be distinguished here and there.

Long experience out of doors, at all hours and in all seasons, had taught Cady to pick landmarks, and soon he was quite familiar with the lay of the land for some distance round about their camp.

He knew the night noises of the forest as well as the city dweller knows the night noises of the hotel or of the apartment building. There were many sounds, none of which had power to excite his interest, but, after the manner of his kind, he was alert for some sounds that were unusual.

For that reason, when he heard their three horses snorting excitedly, he was certain that the animals had seen or heard something that should have his attention.

Drawing back into the shadow of a clump of bushes, he sat up straight and waited, searching the timber in all directions with eyes that were much better in the gloom that they had to penetrate, than yours or mine would have been.

He saw nothing. He heard nothing. The horses were quiet again. Perhaps they had been alarmed by some prowling animal that had gratified its curiosity concerning the invaders of its haunts and made off in the darkness.

Suddenly, there was the slightest sound behind him. Turning his head, he brought his temples against the chilly tube of a revolver.

"I have the drop on you," whispered a voice. "Make no noise. I don't want Marshal Bill and Old Dick aroused. Give up your arms!"

Cady did not reply. But he thrust his hand down to his belt and drew up with it a big shooter that he pointed back under his arm, discharging one of its chambers before the enemy understood what he was about.

He heard a cry of pain, and the muzzle of the revolver at his temple dropped against his jaw. Up went his arm and the weapon with which he had been menaced was sent spinning through the air. Twisting himself round where he sat, the Prince of the Pampas seized his assailant by the throat and jammed him down in the grass on the flat of his back.

"What's up?" asked Old Dick, as he and Bill Piper got on their feet, each prepared and eager to take a hand in whatever was happening.

"This way, boys," said Col. Cady. "We're not attacked. It was only a sneaking assassin, and I've got a good grip on his windpipe, and I reckon I put some lead into him somewhere, too. Bring a match, one of you."

Another installment of this very extraordinary story, increasing in interest, will appear in next week's Ledger. All readers desiring our free cameras or patterns will find the conditions named in our advertisements on pages thirteen and fifteen. We strongly advise you to subscribe for the Ledger at once and secure the remainder of this thrilling narrative and many other great stories that will soon appear.

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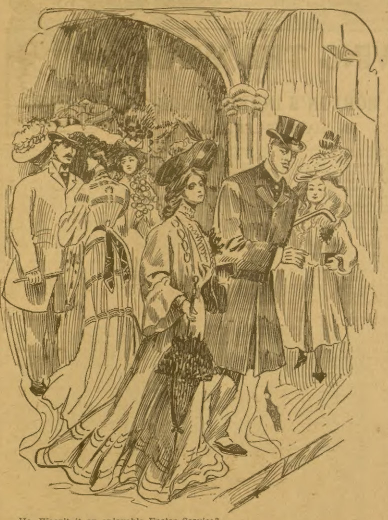
Some people's attempts at being good-natured are about the funniest things that ever happen.

ON EASTER MORN.



He—Wasn't it an enjoyable Easter Service?
She—Yes, indeed; the hats were superior to any I have seen in years.

EASTER-TIDE.

BY MARGARET R. SANGSTER.

Oh, rare as the splendor of lilies,
  And sweet as the violet's breath,
Comes the jubilant morning of Easter,
  A triumph of life over death;
For fresh from the earth's quickened bosom
  Full baskets of flowers we bring,
And scatter their soft satin petals
  To carpet a path for our King.

We have groped through the twilight of sorrow,
  Have tasted the March of fears;
But lo! in the gray of the dawning
  Breaks the hope of our long silent years;
And the loved and the lost we thought perished,
  Who vanished afar in the night,
Will return in the beauty of spring-time
  To beam on our rapturous sight.

Sweet Easter-tide pledges their coming,
  Serene beyond trouble and toil,
As the lily upsprings in its freshness
  From the warm throbbing heart of the soil;
And after all partings, reunion,
  And after all wanderings, home;
Oh, here is the balm for our heartache,
  As up to our Easter we come!

In the countless green blades o' the meadow,
  The sheen of the daffodil's gold,
In the tremulous blue on the mountains,
  The opaline mist on the wold,
In the tinkle of brooks through the pasture,
  The river's strong sweep to the sea,
Are signs of the day that is hasting
  In gladness to you and to me.

So dawn in thy splendor of lilies,
  Thy fluttering violet breath,
O jubilant morning of Easter;
  Thou triumph of life over death!
For fresh from the earth's quickened bosom
  Full baskets of flowers we bring,
And scatter their satin soft petals
  To carpet a path for our King.

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EASTER AND THE PAGAN.

By THOMAS GRAY FESSENDEN.

The Pagan was a Ph. D. and an LL. D, he was also manly and broad-shouldered, and very resolute of bearing. His hair was always arranged precisely; his beard always trimmed to faultless smoothness. His forehead was broad and intellectual. It gave one confidence in the man to look into his clear, gray eyes.

At the sound of her footsteps on the stairs, he turned. She was remarkably pretty at all times, and this morning her Easter gown in nowise detracted from her beauty. A huge bunch of violets rested in her belt, and her eyes were smiling a radiant welcome to him.

On the lowest stair she paused, one little gloved hand resting on the rail.

"You came after all," she said, with a little note of triumph in her voice. "So you didn't bolt at the last moment, as you seemed to think you might."

"Did you imagine," said he gallantly, "that I could break the fetters with which your slightest wish binds me?"

She laughed gayly.

"Come," she said, "we have no time to lose. St. Mark's is always crowded Easter day."

It was a perfect day. The streets were lined with well-dressed, happy people, the chime of many-toned bells rang musically throught the soft air. The Pagan was aware that an expanding happiness possessed him. He felt a vague kindliness of spirit toward all things and all men.

The Pagan was supremely happy, and he was wise enough to realize that any attempted analysis of his emotions would spoil it all. The girl beside him chatted in sprightly fashion, and he found himself replying in spirited repartee. And so they came to St. Mark's, and, passing through the great carved doors, entered the dim church.

The light from an oriel window fell upon them and threw the girl's face into relief against the somberness of the gray walls. The Pagan found that relief a most engrossing study.

Hundreds of little candles in the chancel made brilliant spots in the gloom. The air was heavy with incense and the odor of countless lilies. Then from the organ came the low, enchanting notes of the prelude, rising and swelling, until in full crescendo it surged into Haydn's wonderful mass.

The Pagan was susceptible to music. A great joy seemed to tighten his throat.

He glanced at the girl. In the light from the oriel window he saw a tear glimmering on her lashes. From the choir a great, rich voice was proclaiming the risen Christ.

They were standing in the pew, and the Pagan sidled nearer the girl. Covertly he caught her hand, and held it with a firm, determined pressure.

She turned her eyes and read all the meaning in his own. Her face lighted with infinite understanding, and the Pagan's very common and very material world seemed to melt away into inconsequential nothingness.

During all the rest of the service the Pagan thought deeply. Their friendship had always been so perfect—he had been so utterly blind to things emotional, that the revelation of that moment in which their eyes had met was more or less of a shock to him.

And yet he was so unqualifiedly happy now, he wondered why he had never before imagined whither the path of their friendship was trending.

He turned to the girl. Her eyes were on the pages of her psalter, but on either cheek was a bright spot of color. With the halo of light from the window about her, she seemed indeed, some saint.

The Pagan was suddenly smitten with a keen sense of his own unworthiness. He felt himself some unregenerate, straying with sacrilegious feet into holy places.

It was just past high noon when the service neded, and they came from the dim church into the April sunshine.

There were hundreds of things the Pagan wished to say; they were even on the tip of his tongue; yet somehow he could not seem to formulate words which would properly express them.

The girl, too, was pensively silent. The few commonplace remarks she now and again ventured in a perfunctory manner seemed forced and absurd.

It was not until they were nearing her door that the Pagan broached the subject which held his mind, and then it was haltingly and in clumsy fashion.

"I want to say everything," said he, "and I can say—nothing. It would be profanation of my thoughts to put them into words. You understand, though, don't you?" he ended lamely.

"Yes. I understand," she said, looking away from him.

They mounted the steps and she handed the Pagan the latchkey.

"I'm such an unworthy sinner!" he burst out, contritely as he opened the door.

She smiled radiantly. Her eyes regarded him serenely from under the dark lashes.

"Easter," she said very gently, "is primarily for unworthy sinners."

The Pagan was a Ph. D. and an LL. D. But withal he was intently humar

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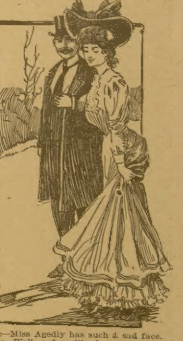
The Woman of It.



He—Miss Agedly has such a sad face.
She—Well, a face like hers is enough to make any one sad.

◆

Glass bath-tubs are now coming into general use. They are both cheaper and more sanitary than enamel. They are cast solid, the operation requiring but five minutes.

SOWING THE WIND;

or

VALE MORTON'S INHERITANCE.

By IDA SHEPLER.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 15, April 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER V.

LOT MORTON'S DEATH.

Lot Morton's rage was something terrible to hear and see when this disgrace upon his home and name became known to him. Desda held (viciously, as he declared) to her resolve that he should not know the name of the father of her daughter. The child was some weeks old before he looked upon it, as it lay in Desda's arms, gazing about with the look of one old and wise.

"What name has that brat besides that of Morton?" her father asked, looking curiously down at it. "Vale," she slowly answered. "Vale means farewell."

"Pity it hadn't bid farewell to earth at its birth, and its idiotic mother with it!" he snarled.

The child turned its eyes from contemplating the white wall above it to the spot from whence the sound of his voice came. The distorted face seemed to attract it. Into its eyes came a strangely searching look for a babe—almost defiance. Leaning over it, Lot Morton ejaculated in a loud tone:

"You little devil! So you dare me, too, do you?"

The babe shrank away from the rough voice, turning its head in a peculiar way as it did so, and giving him a long look sideways. That instant, as though a pen of fire had written its birthright across its eyes, he recognized that look of another implanted in the child's face. He had known Harold Woodward by sight, but had not supposed his daughter acquainted with him.

"Ah, ha!" he breathed, giving the child another inspection before he reached for his gun. A minute afterward he was going down the mountain road with his weapon slung across his shoulder.

Mrs. Morton, giving Desda a reproving glance, exclaimed: "'Twas just as well to have told him, Desda. The child's face has told it. Oh, that this had not come to us until I was safely hid away in my grave beyond the trouble of this world! He has gone to interview somebody, and there will be somebody who will know and give him a hint, now mind me!"

Half a day afterward, Lot Morton came back, the expression on his face, one of set ferocity. Desda, in desperation, caught him by the arm, crying: "What bloody errand do you now go upon?"

"To Richmond, jade! You know where without the asking. You have covered the footsteps of Harold Woodward better than he cared to cover them himself."

"You go to make the shame of your house a national talk, to have my name bandied in every sheet in the land. I swear to you, father, that Harold Woodward is innocent! If you kill him, I will go upon the stand and swear that you have committed a premeditated murder—have killed an innocent man. Your neck will then stretch upon the gallows."

Her vehemence, her frenzied words, but added wrath to wrath.

"You are insane for love of this rake. I may hang, but remember, no difference what the outcome be, that I have put one more libertine out of the world, and have killed the right man, say what you may to the contrary. Be he king's son or clodhopper's son, it is all the same to me."

At the door, Lot Morton looked back, not at Desda, but upon the bowed head of his wife. Then in a voice in which was a hint of tenderness, he called back: "Good bye, Maria. I have brought great trouble to you in the past. I have not been as you would have me, but this I am not bringing upon you. This, Desda has brought to both."

When he had gone, Desda paced the floor as one possessed. Turning, at last, she said, in a decisive manner:

"Mother, I cannot, cannot wait here! I must go, and by some means, some way or how, prevent this useless, needless tragedy. I must go, and don't say me nay, mother."

"I have nothing to say, Desda, if your mission be to prevent further trouble, which I fear me it can never do. You know where we keep the little hoard of money. Take what you need."

Dressed very plainly, and heavily veiled, Desda, by well-guarded inquiry, found herself but one train behind her father. A morning paper left by a previous passenger lay on the seat into which she slipped. To while away the time, although her great fear and anxiety almost blinded her eyes to the printed page, she glanced over it, Harold's name, in the society items at last wavering across her vision. It was an announcement that he had gone to Savannah to wed the youngest daughter of the distinguished Judge Cahill. The beauty of his prospective bride, as well as his own, promising brilliant career and family position were dwelt upon at some length; but Desda saw only the first lines, realized from the first statement, that Harold was not in Richmond, and that to reach him she must leave the train at the next station and circumvent her father by a roundabout way into Savannah. She felt that Judge Cahill's from the prominence of his name, would be easily found, but further than the fact that she must warn Harold, her mind would not work. The bitterness of death was again stealing across her brain, the desire to get away from it all, to hide away from sight and sound in the soothing realms of death. She flung aside the paper, clutching at the seat in front of her. There was something in the monotonous roll of the wheels calling her to them. "No, no!" she whispered, in frightened way to herself. "I promised Samp, and I cannot desert the child that Harold has deserted. No, no! I must stay with my sin, my misery, until God calls me."

Every difficulty fell in the way of her getting speedily to Savannah. At one place her train was delayed by a wreck, and after waiting for hours, was sent around by another route to get into a ditch itself. Badly shaken, and wondering why she should have been spared and to what useless end, when others, better and happier, had gone down to death, Desda crept from beneath the debris of the car she had occupied, to wait, still impatient and altogether despondent, until chance was given her to proceed on her journey. An uncanny feeling was taking possession of her, that spirits were throwing obstacles in her way to hold her hand from that which was impending, if she failed to reach Harold.

Desda's train pulled slowly to a stop at Savannah, from the rear of another train, just in from an opposite direction, she noticed a familiar figure descending. Naught but the black, deep-set eyes and heavy whiskers were visible under the large slouching hat, while the gun he carried carefully under his arm, the barrel pointing groundward, drew no particular attention—he looked like a hunter returning to town, that was all. But Desda, with a convulsive shiver, knew. She knew from the movements of that broad form and from the very way the gun was carried, that her father had run the game he followed, to quarry. His step, his attitude, suggested that to her.

Pulling tightly over her face the black veil that hid her features from casual observers, but not the sight from her own sharp, young eyes, Desda hurried out after her father, who was making his way to a side entrance of the depot—an entrance at which cabs, coaches, and various vehicles were depositing passengers for the outgoing trains, and taking others away.

At one side of the entrance, Lot Morton took a stand, pulling his hat lower over his eyes, now concentrated into tiny, scintillating sparks of fire that took not of nothing near him, but were cantered closely on every new arrival in hack or coach. Scarcely was this done, before Desda realized that for which he waited, Harold Woodward's wedding party. Somehow he had learned on which train Harold would leave for his wedding trip. A gay party accompanied the young couple to the station in a tallyho coach, drawn by white horses, richly caparisoned in blue and gold.

It was only afterward, that, as a dream, Desda remembered all this—the illumined, happy face of the bride, merry jokes and laughter, the showers of rice that some of the party still kept pelting over bride and groom. The crowd upon the platform, surging forward to see the grand turnout, pushed her father back against her, just as he was raising the gun to his shoulder. She heard the muttered imprecation, and saw him brace himself to fight a way through, when he realized that the crowd had borne Harold and his bride out of his range and into the waiting rooms beyond.

The crowd separated to let the large, strange-looking man through. Close behind followed Desda, her mind acting quickly. She had not expected the meeting with Harold to be in the presence of her father. She had hoped to reach him first. This was now impossible, for, leaving his bride in an inner waiting room, Harold was hurrying to secure tickets. Desda could scarcely keep in touch with her father, because of the crowd, now contesting every foot of the space about the ticket office. She saw her father set aside the rifle against the wall of the ticket office, and draw a heavy army revolver from the pocket of his coat. She had not expected this. Her decision in the hurry of the moment had been, not to call a warning to Harold, for, knowing something of his lack of caution, she realized that he would face her father, come what might. She would trust to throwing upt the rifle, and leave the rest in this instance to the police. One burly member of the force she had already called to her. But now there was something more deathly to deal with, than a single-barreled rifle.

Reaching for the tickets, Harold felt something graze the side of his head, and startled by the loud report so close, turned to look into the bore of a large revolver, now held almost against his face. Then, in a flash, he saw the black, murderous eyes of Lot Morton, saw Desda's hand reach to grasp the revolver in her father's hand, heard another report, and the same instant, so it seemed, felt the crowd melt away from his vicinity, and saw the man lying at his feet, while a slender, black-robed form now bent over the dying man, imploring his forgiveness for this thing she had done.

Somewhere about Lot Morton's throat, the bullet had entered, which was intended for Harold Woodward's brain. It had been done by the turning of the revolver in his hand through Desda's struggles to secure it. But the black eyes, dimming with throes of death, refused to look at Desda. Instead, they turned, burning yet with hate, upon the man now looking into his face, regret and stupfied horror settling over the fair features. The lips of the dying man moved, but no sound came from them.

"Desda, can I help you? Is there anything, anything, that I can now do?" Harold's words and actions were wildly imploring, as he knelt besides her.

"No, no," she whispered, too low for others to hear. "I came to save you if possible, but I had no thought, oh, merciful heaven, no thought, that to save you I must add murder to my other sins! I did not intend to hurt him. It was done in the struggle. You can do nothing now. It is too late. Go to her. And may I be forgiven this awful thing that I have done!"

At that moment a policeman interfered with: "What is this man to both or either of you?"

"Nothing to him. Simply a stranger," Desda quickly answered. "He is my father—gone suddenly insane."

"And went to shooting at everything in sight before we could hinder," interposed the policeman, that Desda had motioned to her assistance. "Lucky thing the girl was so brave, and," this aside, "poor feller, he is gone. Don't take on so, Miss, for you couldn't help it. The rest was an accident. Don't say you killed him. You didn't. He did that himself."

The train upon which Harold and his bride were to journey had already been called. Maurine and her most intimate friends, who had accompanied her into the depot, looked about, wondering at the delay.

"You must wait for another train," Maurine's friend had said. "Some kind of trouble has happened out there. Did you see the people runnin? And I am sure I heard shots. Perhaps it is that which is keeping Harold."

At that moment Harold came up to them. He was not aware of it, but across his face, now drawn and white, blood from a wound above his forehead was trickling.

"Oh, Harold, what is the matter? What has happened, that you are so white and strange-looking? And that blood?" Maurine's quick questioning came in a gasping, horrified way. He thought of it afterward. Instead of coming toward him, she shrank away as though she already knew.

Harold's best man smiled, and to reassure her, said half-jocosely:

"Harold had better be rejoicing instead of looking so glum. I would, I am very sure, if I had met with such a close call and good miss as he has. You see, girls, some crazy man, traveling somewhere with his daughter, suddenly let loose with a revolver, out there. Harold got a little rake of the skin along the top of his head—a mere scratch. But the old fellow did for himself, that's certain. He is out of his trouble."

In the confusion, none but the three most deeply interested knew that there had been precision in the dead man's aim. Desda adroitly allowed the opinion by the crowd to pass unchallenged, and when she brought the body home, and her neighbors questioned, she pointed to the reports upon the printed page of a newspaper, and they asked no more. Samp, alone was told, for Lot Morton's wife trusted him as her only friend.

CHAPTER VI.

VALE MORTON.

For nineteen springs, the grass had grown anew upon Lot Morton's grave, and Desda, grown old and wan, while other women older, yet retained many of their girlish charms, wept over it, tears springing from a heartache as bitter with despair as in that day he had died in her arms. The man she had loved—the man she still loved—her interest had fitfully followed all these years. Of good heritage, handsome, ambitious, and brilliant, he had, as had his ancestors before him, made himself an honored and widely known name in his chosen profession as well as in a political way. Desda knew from the Richmond paper, that weekly, all these years since had found its way into her humble home, that his home life was said to be perfect, his wife a leader of society, a royal entertainer, and above all a sweet, intelligent woman. Into that house had come but one child, a girl, now eighteen.

Soon after the birth of her child, Harold had sent a check for a large amount of money to Desda. This she had promptly returned. As the years had gone on, other checks had come to her, to be used not only to educate the child, but to defray her own living expenses. Each had gone back as had the first, and but once did she send an answer with them. It read: "I will not accept your money. Our child does not really need it. God forgive you for the heritage of shame in the eyes of the world, that you have imposed upon your own. She was born with the intelligence of your people, and is growing into womanhood, the most beautiful that I have ever seen. She has inherited your looks, softened and intensified into the face of an angel. She is of a strange nature. I do not understand her. So far she does not seem to know her heritage. When that times comes, I cannot guess how she will meet it."

Desda's neighbors honored her at first for her seclusion from the world and her intense grief over the death of her father, but when the sadness and seclusion merged into years, they felt that she was overdoing the matter. After the death of her mother, they said, "Now she will marry Samp Raredon, who stays unmarried yet for love of her." They were mistaken. Samp still proved a best friend, but all of his love, when he had fully realized her woeful case, had suddenly slipped away, leaving only pity in its place for her, and hatred for the man who had deserted her. From the first, kind and sympathetic as he was by nature, he had determined to hate the child of this man, and really had avoided notice of her until, through loneliness, the pretty little thing came mutely begging to be his friend. Once that she had crept into his heart, the wonder of her soft beauty, so unlike that of all the children he knew, allied with her gentle manners and her quaintly winning smile, grew upon ihm until he came to with a start one day, to realize that because of those eyes and the casual likeness that could not but show in voice and action, his hatred of the father had completely slipped away.

Desda, shrinking from a single day's separation from her child, dreaded the knowledge that might too early come to her through gibes of her companions, would not allow her to enter school, teaching the child the lessons she, herself had learned at school, and as she grew older, having a music and drawing teacher from the village in the valley to give Vale lessons in these studies in which she had very soon shown a proficiency threatening to task her teacher's powers.

But the girl, naturally of scholarly nature, at sixteen, began to realize that she was behind her years in other studies. It had been no difficult matter to keep her from the world and companions of her own age until now, with but few friends besides the nearest neighbors, Samp, chief among them. Then, to Desda's consternation, Vale had taken charge of her own life, her own goings and comings, in a high-handed manner.

When very young, Vale had asked where her papa was. To Samp, her mother, and her grandmother, she had put this question, to be met only with a sad shake of the head, or an evasion. But questioning Mollie, the colored cook, and wife of the faithful colored man, who looked after the Morton farm, she had been told that her papa was not a good man, that he was dead, and that she must never mention his name to her mamma, for he had broken her heart. This was why she was so silent and pale and why she seldom went from home. The colored woman believed that she was telling the truth, for a rumor had been set afloat shortly after Lot Morton's death, that he had killed his daughter's betrayer, though receiving a death wound himself from the man. The name of this man was never guessed.

Yo' mamma wus mos' unhappily married, chile," the woman, with good intention, had added, and Vale, contented with this version, had let the matter drop.

The village to which Desda had gone to school, had broadened into a small city. To the co-educational college situated here, Vale expressed her intention of going, riding back and forth each day on a pretty, but strong pony, that Samp had given her on her last birthday.

Vale's face, perfect in its soft contour, its faultless flower-like complexion, and the smile curving the mouth and deepening the violet shadows in the eyes, won her friends at first sigh. She kept them without seeming energy on her part. That indefinable patrician look and air brooding over that perfect face and delicate form, touching every tone and action, won respect for her immediately; the love that came next, she kept because she effaced herself and thought only, so it seemed, of the other.

She had not been in the school one month, until every teacher in it was her sworn friend, all eager to help the bright and studious girl to make up the lost time as speedily as possible.

Three years afterward she was still in the school, but now a pupil of which the college boasted. Everything was predicted for her. Oratorical and literary honors she carried off with little effort or thought, as though born to them. It was the same with studies closely connected with or dependent upon memory and reason. Her beauty and sweetness, still held her friends. To men she was gracious, but that was all. The little coquetries natural to most young girls were foreign to her nature. She did nothing to attract notice, so all men who saw her, declared, and yet she attracted it, and with tact, knew how to rid herself of loverlike attentions, leaving the man feeling that if her love was not for him at the present, there might be a chance for future hope, and anyway, that she liked him better than all the others.

Desda secretly rejoiced that her daughter had never cared for lovers. She believed that much of Vale's shrinking from thoughts of marriage was due to her oft-repeated warnings, lessons, and admonitions in the matter of love and of trusting the word of any man, unless it might be such as Samp Raredon, and of that kind there were few, she averred. But had she known that Vale had simply listened to these lessons, quietly, sweetly, as she listened to most things not connected with study, hearing them not, and that her indifference to lovers came from an unresponsive heart—a heart not formed to hold strong affection, despite all of its outward signs expressed in her eyes and voice—any anxiety yet felt on that score might have been dissipated, for such

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natures transformed the commoner temptations of love, making misery for others in this line, but never for themselves. Harold Woodward's nature in more ways than one, had come down to Vale.

Of late, one young man, a professor in the college, had been more persistent than others in trying to win her love. He was determined that she should not evade him with little girlish ways, as she had others. She was now more than a little girl, and should begin to know her mind in matters of love. His passion would not brook half-refusals. Before Vale's beauty and intelligence had so thoroughly stormed his heart, this young man had shown more than a friendly interest in a classmate of Vale's. This girl, a black-eyed, vixenish sort of creature, whose only claims to men's notice lay in her beautiful eyes and audacious manner, had fallen in love with the young professor, and now vigorously hated Vale.

Vale had made her first enemy. Outwardly, she showed sad concern that this must be so. Inwardly, she anathematized the girl with all the hate of old Lot Morton, and wished that the professor were more attractive; then it might have been worth while to have taken him entirely from her jealous rival.

One languid afternoon, Vale had gone out among the deepest of the shaded places on the college campus to study, when the professor presented himself and his tiresome plea. Scarcely had he seated himself near Vale, when his former love, her eyes flashing with illy repressed fire, stood before them. The professor shot her a look in which surprise and indignation blended, while Vale, calmly arose, and tucking the text book she had brought out, under one arm, she threw the other about the body of a small tree, bringing herself into one of the many graceful poses so natural to her. She then faced the girl, a certain hauteur curling the corners of her mouth and showing in her voice, as she slowly said:

"It is just as well to say all that you have to say about this matter now, Miss Winters, and then, when we have heard it and you have heard the little I have to say about it, we may perhaps be friends."

"Friends!" the girl snapped, viciously. "I was never your friend. You could not impose upon me as you did upon the others. No; I am of good birth, of gentle breeding. I care not to know the love-child of old Lot Morton's daughter! She cannot be one of my associates or friends!" Then, the flood-gates of jealousy opened, Miss Winters let forth a stream of vituperation and fault-finding with Vale's deceitful character and her wolf's nature hidden under sheep's clothing, with all of the varied stories glinting through that had gathered about the name of Desda Morton at the birth of her child and death of her father—stories mainly untrue, and which Miss Winters, through hate for Vale, had of late gone seeking from old country gossips.

Vainly the young professor sought ways to stop that angry, and really vulgar, flow of words, consternation filling his heart that he had really been the prime cause of this outbreak upon Vale's hapless head, and fearing that she would hate him forever, because of it.

The look of hauteur had gone from Vale's face. In its place had stolen a strange expression of wonder and confusion. The soft, white arm, from which the lace had fallen back, as she had thrown it about the tree, as though to steady herself, suddenly became rigid as steel, and drawn from its resting place was raised in warning manner.

"Let her alone!" she exclaimed, turning from the burning eyes of the girl, to face the professor. "Let her alone! I care not a puff of wind for the character she is giving me, but I do want to hear all of these lies she is concocting as she runs on of my mother's lack of chastity—my good, true mother—and of the blot upon my birth. Go on with the rest of your falsehoods. They are quite entertaining."

The angry girl paused in half-surprise, then continued in a lower, but sneering tone:

"Lies? You are not a baby, surely, that you do not know what you are? I am truly surprised, Miss Morton. That you have always borne the name of Morton, should have told you that much. I am also surprised at Professor Stinewell's choice in love. The Stinewell name is one of our best. To ally it with that of poor, white trash—and a spurious offspring at that—is——"

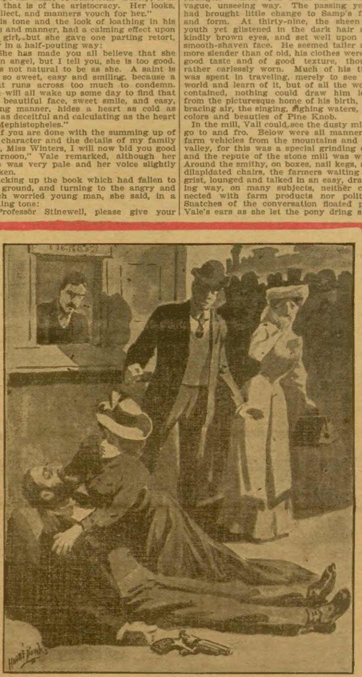
"That will do, Miss Winters!" Professor Stinewell's tone was sharp and incisive. "We have had enough of your fishwife vulgarity. You have shown your breeding, your good old name, truly! The birth and good breeding are all upon the side of the girl you revile. I will consider myself the most blest of men if she will but stoop to accept the name of Stinewell. Surely, it is she that is of the aristocracy. Her looks, intellect, and manners vouch for her."

His tone and the look of loathing in his eyes and manner, had a calming effect upon the girl, but she gave one parting retort, now in a half-pouting way:

"She has made you all believe that she is an angel, but I tell you, she is too good. It is not natural to be as she. A saint is not so sweet, easy and smiling, because a saint runs across too much to condemn. You will all wake up some day to find that her beautiful face, sweet smile, and easy, loving manner, hides a heart as cold as ice, as deceitful and calculating as the heart of Mephistopheles."

"If you are done with the summing up of my character and the details of my family tree, Miss Winters, I will now bid you good afternoon," Vale remarked, although her face was very pale and her voice slightly shaken.

Picking up the book which had fallen to the ground, and turning to the angry and much worried young man, she said, in a meaning tone:



The bullet had entered Lot Morton's throat.

"Professor Stinewell, please give your irate friend to understand that our meeting here was not by appointment. Also, that I have never sought your love, because I do not in turn love you. Adois to both."

With this parting word, Vale hurried away in the direction of the college stables, where she ordered her pony brought to her. Then, donning the dark blue riding habit and the large hat of the same color, which brought out the fairness of her face and formed an exquisite seting for the light, brown hair, with its shades of bronze, she rode swiftly out of the grounds and toward home.

CHAPTER VII.

As the hoofs of the pony struck the cool softness of the valley road following the river, he sprang forward into a rocking gallop, Vale giving him the rein to go as he pleased, her mind whirling, pained, and dismayed with thoughts new to her. The family pride of the Woodwards, commingled with the vindictive nature of old Lot Morton, long quiescent in her girlish brain, was struggling for outlet.

How could she have been so childishly stupid as to take Mollie's vague words at such worth? She did not guess that her quiet life, devoid of society, had really kept her a child in many ways. The friendships she had formed in college had not been carried beyond its walls, and these girls, with the expection of Miss Winters, were ladies. Not half a dozen knew of the bar sinister connected with Vale's name, and those who did, as young girls are apt to do, wove a veil of romance about it because of the girl's great beauty and noble manners.

When the ringing hoofs left the valley sod for the mountain road, Vale pulled the pony down to a walk. At the stone mill, she paused under the overhanging boughs for him to quench his thirst at the old stone trough. Nineteen years had brought few changes to the mill—sets of new and modern machinery, perhaps—while the store, blacksmith shop, and its adjunct, the wagonmaker's shop, had all been enlarged and some cottages added. All this belonged to Samp Raredon, who yet lived in the old stone house, slightly modernized, but still presided over by the relatives who had been there nineteen years before, although colored servants now did all the work.

The years, by legacy as well as by his own business tact, had early brought a goodly income to Samp, and this was not dissipated.

Samp stood near the mill talking to a stranger. Vale's eyes dwelt on him in a vague, unseeing way. The passing years had brought little change to Samp's face and form. At thirty-nine, the sheen of youth yet glistened in the dark hair and kindly brown eyes, and set well upon the smooth-shaven face. He seemed taller and more slender than of old, his clothes were in good taste and of good texture, though rather carlessly worn. Much of his time was spent in traveling, merely to see the world and learn of it, but of all the world contained, nothing could draw him long from the picturesque home of his birth, the bracing air, the singing, sighing waters, the colors and beauties of Pine Knob.

In the mill, Vail could see the dusty miller go to and fro. Below were all manner of farm vehicles from the mountains and the valley, for this was a special grinding day and the repute of the stone mill was wide. Around the smithy, on boxes, nail kegs, and dilapidated chairs, the farmers waiting for grist, lounged and talked in an easy, drawling way, on many subjects, neither connected with farm products nor politics. Snatches of the conversation floated past Vale's ears as she let the pony dring slow draughts of the cool water. At last one voice, old, cracked, but very shrill and penetrating, brought her mind back from its wandering in a startled way. She knew of the speaker. Pastor Brown, they called him. He was over eighty years old, and now, with a sister, older than himself, was living three miles away in a lonely mountain cabin, his living mainly, though secretly, supplied from the store owned by Samp. Twice a week, regularly, the old fellow rode an old Claybank horse across the divide to hear the news, to chat an afternoon with the people who congregates about the mill, and to carry back, each time, a load of provisions.

"I tell you, Jabe Pearson, you are wrong," the old man was arguing. "That storm was in May, 18—. Can I ever forget it? This mountain never saw the like, you say, and never did the side of it that slopes into old Kentucky ever see such a one, either. I'll never forget it. Too many things to make me remember it—the people blown away, or killed with lightning, the cattle never seen again, the woods mown down like wheat, and the houses that went sky high. Who wouldn't remember it? When it was coming, who should ride up on a gallop but a runaway couple to be married. They were always coming over there, these eloping people. Here they must go publicly and get a license; on our side none was needed. They were in a dreadful hurry. The man was of better class than the girl—that is, his clothes and manner, somehow, told me that. Sister and I pleaded with them to stay, for the storm was even then booming; but, no, they rode away toward this direction in spite of our warning, and were killed, both of them, I am sure, and swept away in the flood that must a crossed their route."

In 18—. That was the year of her birth—her unlucky birth. Somehow, the words of the old parson fitted in with her mood, but how, she could not guess as yet. Samp raised his hat as she passed, but did not come for the little chat that had become customary each evening as she returned from school. Lately he had slightly avoided her. For, it had come to him that this love of his mature years carried an intensity with it, foreign to the mild, half-brotherly love he had felt for Desda. More than a year ago, he had discovered that Vale was all of life to him. With this discovery came the resolve, bound about with pain, that she must never know of his love for her. Samp was an ardent lover of nature, and now all of nature's beauties, its colors, lights, and songs, seemed pale besides the blue of Vale's eyes, the white and pink of cheek and brow, the music of that little laugh. He felt it almost sacrilege to love the girl.

As Vale turned the head of the pony again for home, she heard Samp call to the old pastor, now hobbling toward the hitching post and the Claybank horse. "Father Brown, keep a look out for that wild cat. It isn't any fake about it. It's a sure enough wild cat, and stays hidden some place about Shark's Hollow. I thought they were a thing of the past in these parts, but this one has found a den here, and is bound to remain, it seems, till some of the hunters come up on it in the open. Keep an eye on the branches at the side of the path. It might spring on you. No revolver. Here, take mine. Take it, I say."

Mumbling something about being more afraid of a revolver of that kind than of a wild cat, the old minister hid it carefully away in a side pocket, to the evident amusement of the crowd.

When Vale reached home she went immediately in search of her mother. Desda was in the garden getting vegetables for supper. Vale watched her a full minute in a thoughtful way. Pale and silent she had been ever since she could remember, but now, for the first time, the girl noticed the extreme attenuation of the body, the low, hoarse cough, the gleam in the eyes that showed the signal light of disease, battling with bodily hosts of life, which it was vanquishing, one by one. At the realization of this new trouble, Vale caught both hands over her heart to still its keen pain. Then, taking the vegetable basket from her mother's hand, she said:

"Come, mother. I must talk immediately with you. Come to my room."

In an anxous way, Desda followed her there. After locking the door, Vale sat down at her mother's feet.

"Now, mamma," she began, "tell me all there is to tell of my birth and my father. The time has come when I will know."

"Is it worth while, Vale?" her mother asked. "Woul it not better be left untold? What good can it ever do for you to know?"

"Everything. I must know all!"

There was a fierce insistence in Vale's voice, a sound new to her mother. Thus urged, she allowed herself to be put under a fire of questioning from Vale—before it was ended, Vale was in possession of all the carefully treasured letters from Harold Woodward to her mother, all the clippings from the papers that told of his advancing career, everything, even to her mother's attempted suicide, except the avowed love of Samp Raredon for her. This for some strange reason, Desda hid away from her daughter.

When it was all told, Vale arose from her low stool. Then, in a thoughtful, troubled way, she paced the room, coming back to say at last:

"My life is over in these parts. My school days are ended here. I cannot face my companions now, knowing that which they have long known. I do not blame you, mother. Stop your weeping. But, oh, I hate him, hate him to the death, and her, who took him from you, and that girl who usurps my rightful place! She is honored, while I, as Ishmael, wander the world over with mark of shame upon my brow. Here, before Heaven, I swear that he shall suffer for this—that all he loves shall suffer!"

"My child, my child, will you further break my heart?"

"Your heart has been broken. It can have no further breaks. I must think of my own heart now," was the testy answer. Then, continuing, Vale queried:

"Mother, you remember the dreadful storm of May 5th, the May of the year I was born? You remember that yourself and Harold Woodward went across the mountain into Kentucky and were married? Afterward he made you believe it was not a legal marriage, because there was no license. You did not know that Kentucky held such marriages legal when put to test by court. It was the day of the storm, or the evening, rather, that you faced it back. I suppose that you took refuge in some sheltered house, or your lives would have paid the forfeit of such rashness." Vale's tone was judicial, convincing. Desda gazed into her daughter's eyes, suprise and denial in her own.

"Vale, what do you mean?" she gasped. "There was no marriage. Would to God, for your sake, there had been! No, no! I was not away from home that day."

"You certainly were," was the decisively firm answer. "Your grief at that times turned your brain and made you forget. Understand this. There was such a marriage. Say it over and over in your mind, that there was. It will all come back to you."

"But, Vale," Desda feebly began.

"There is to be no cringing back to your old crazy state, I tell you. There was such a marriage. You thought of his wishes then, I can plainly see—thought of them to the undoing of yourself and all connected with you. But, remember this, you shall think first of his daughter in this day. Do you understand! My welfare, not his, is at stake—my name! Do you hear? My name!"

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Nearly ever man thinks he has the boss wife.

Human sponges will absorb anything but water.

A left-handed compliment sometimes turns out all right.

Chronic hand shakers always have something up their sleeves.

Young man, beware of the saucy girl—she will make a sassy wife.

There is no hope for the man who knowingly persists in acting the fool.

Both the miser and the spendthrift think each other foolish—and they are.

Milwaukee is to be congratulated in having broken itself of the Rose habit.

More wives would respect their husbands if they were not so well acquainted.

In times of peace the wise nation makes strenuous preparations for more peace.

Cannibals are naturally tender hearted—at least, they are fond of—their fellow men.

Anyway, a woman is always grateful to the man who gives her a chance to refuse him.

It is indeed bad luck that scatters no ray of sunshine. The mine mules will enjoy the strike.

A gambler's wife never knows whether it is to be a sealskin coat or a calico wrapper for her.

It's easier for the average woman to preserve fruit than it is for her to preserve her good looks.

The suspicious man keeps one eye on his neighbor, but the wise man keeps both eyes on himself.

Depew is still drawing his pay as senator, but his capacity for harm has been reduced very much.

St. Petersburg has just had a popular election, the only persons not participating being the people.

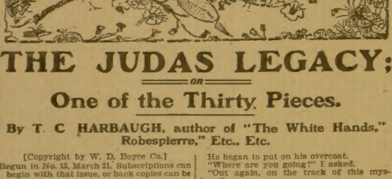
President Roosevelt stands with the rest of his countrymen in opposing the malevolent assimilation of Niagara.

Automobiles may soon be so cheap that people who like to show off their money will have no real enjoyment in riding in them.

While it is interesting to hear that money is easier, what we should like to know is whether the people who have it are easier.

With the naked eye President Roosevelt thinks he can see a few spots on the packers, although they are fresh from their immunity bath.

It appears that they have not succeeded in breaking women of wearing hats in Paris theaters. This may be because Paris cannot bring itself to pattern after Chicago.



THE JUDAS LEGACY;

OR

One of the Thirty Pieces.

By T. C HARBAUGH, author of "The White Hands," Robespierre," Etc., Etc.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

FROM CAIAPHAS TO PILATE.

The thought that I had discovered in Professor Semphroni the double of Caiaphas, the hight priest, went through me like an electric bolt.

My curiosity had doomed me.

Had I stifled it and let the forbidden book alone, I might not be in the toils.

The old man looked deep into my very soul and, as I had confessed, there was nothing for him to do but to take my life.

We were alone in the room.

I heard nothing but the echo of his voice, saw nothing but the gleaming eyes of the strange man.

Would no help come?

Suddenly I heard, as from afar, the opening, the closing of a door.

It struck a chord of new terror to my soul and I doubted not that the executioner had come.

The man of mystery turned his head and seemed to listen for a moment.

All at once, as if by magic, the room swam in darkness.

It seemed to me that I stood within a cloud of blackness that enveloped me like a mantle.

I was dragged across the room offering no resistance, for that was impossible.

From that strange chamber I was taken and hurried across another as dark.

The cold hand of Semphroni was at my wrist.

He did not speak and I could not cry out, for the terror of the moment seemed to hold back the slightest sound.

Suddenly I came to another apartment dimly lit up by a half hooded light.

Then again I saw the face of the singular man.

"Fear not, child," said he, for the first time, speaking with kindness. "'Tis the hour of fate and mystery. You may yet live."

A smile came to his half parted lips. He looked down at me, but did not shake his grip loose.

Had he become struck with fear? Who had entered the house that he would fear him?

Dragging me across the floor, Semphroni touched a concealed button on the wall and a door flew open.

I was pushed forward again.

Half stumbling across another chamber, I brought up in darkness, but the following moment I was free.

The hand had left my wrist.

I stood for a little while where he had left me and then went on.

In another moment I felt the cold wind of that October night on my cheek and then a hand, unseen pushed me forward.

I fell across a threshold, but maintained my balance and stood in the outer air.

I was out of the house of mystery at last.

The faint outlines of other houses rose before me. I saw here and there the glimmer of a light like some great Gorgon eye watching over the city.

The terror of the moment weighed heavily upon my soul and with a cry, at last I bolted away.

The run of the next few moments was blotted from the book of my memory.

I took no heed of my route, saw no one, but ran on and on until I reached a corner, where I stopped and drew back in the shadow of a building.

Where was I?

A man came toward me and halted suddenly.

I uttered a cry of joy.

It was Harold Hume.

What fate or fortune had brought him to the spot I did not ask.

He came closer still and uttered my name. It all seemed a dream, a nightmare of the dark.

"You? Perdita?" he cried. "What brings you here, girl?"

I uttered a few words and he broke in suddenly.

"We will go where you can tell your story without interruption."

Ten minutes later I was seated in his apartments in another part of the town.

A good fire burned in the grate and Harold, falling back in his chair watched me in silence.

In as few words as possible, I narrated the story of the night. He never took his eyes from me while I talked.

When I had finished, he rose and stood over me.

"It seems incredible," said he. "But it must be true. It is possible that the Judas coin fell into the hands of Semphroni? Does that man know where Violet is?"

"I cannot tell. But what I saw in the forbidden book tells me that he is leagued with the guardians of the accursed shekel."

"It must be!" cried Harold. "We will see."

He began to put on his overcoat.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"Out again, on the track of this mystery."

"To Semphroni's?"

"Why not?"

I did not speak, but only watched him.

There was a look of determination, if not of vengeance, in Harold Hume's eyes.

What if those men should meet, one seamed with mystery and cunning, the other rash, but brave?

"You will not be molested again tonight," he went on. "Remain here or go to your lodgings. I leave you to do what you will. I must go."

Half a minute afterward I was alone in the chamber.

I heard the sounds of his footsteps die away on the steps beyond. I waited a minute longer and then stole from the house. The lights of the street blinded me for a little while, but I got my bearings and hastened away.

I was in the act of quitting the sidewalk to cross a street, when a ratting cab pulled up along side.

Drawing back, I stared at the vehicle and would have fled, but the door shot open and a man sprang out. I uttered a cry that soon died in my throat.

It was the spy of the rose bush incident.

Never before had he looked so devilishly handsome as then, in the light that fell upon his dark Oriental face.

He came toward me and reached out his hand with a grimace that would have been a credit to Mephistopheles.

"You? How fortunate!" he exclaimed, as I shrank still further from his outstretched hand.

I tried to cry out, but could not. The coolness of the man filled me with a nameless chill. From Semphroni to this being, was a shift that terrorized.

"Come," his voice was low and soft. "You shall not be harmed. I am Pilate."

The name shot deep into my soul. What was this low lie of cunning? Then, as I recalled the Children of the Temple, I remembered the acts of Pilate of old. He, too, was linked to Judas. And it seemed to me there swelled out upon the night air the cry that still rang down the ages, "Away with Him! Away with Him!"

But there was something fascinating about this sleek young man with the dark face and the darker eyes. Pilate? I spoke the word to myself and he smiled as if he had heard.

"It means safety, child," he said. "If you would find your friend Violet, you will go with me."

If I would find Violet? I uttered a cry that drove me toward the cab and as the door shut down on me I sank back upon the seat and tried to make out in front of me the man who I knew was there.

CHAPTER XIV.

MY DEAR ONE COMES BACK.

I listened as in a trance to the whir of the wheels as the cab rattled over over the stones.

My companion did not speak.

At last the cab stopped and I looked out. With a start I saw that we had reached the house on the avenue, that I had been brought back to Violet's home.

I was helped from the cab and conducted up the steps. The young man opened the door and closed it after us.

"Why have you brought me here?" I asked, as he turned on the lights in the hall.

"Did you not want to come here?"

"I did not think of landing in this house."

"Perhaps not. Your friend——"

"Where is she?"

"Have a little patience. The fifth of October is not yet here."

"But," cried I, " the Judas coin is gone!"

"Ha! you know that?"

"It was taken in the dark."

He did not start at this and we entered the parlor, where I turned quickly upon him. Then I saw him as I had never seen him before.

"You will tell me all," said he. "You say that the shekel is missing?"

"Yes."

"By whom was it taken?"

I proceeded and narrated the circumstance of the taking of the accursed coin, while he listened, now and then with a smile at his lips and now with a frown.

When I had concluded, he took a quick turn about the room. There was about his movements the lure of the wild beast. He was quick and noiseless. I noticed that his hands were brown and slender. They matched his face to perfection.

"I would see," said he. "The coin was taken from the steel safe eh? Let us investigate."

Together we ascended to the treasure room and I turned on the light.

The door of the safe was closed. But for all this it stood slightly ajar and I knew it was not locked.

"You can see for yourself," said I, pointing to the safe. "The locksmith opened it at Harold Hume's command. It was not relocked while I remained here."

He glided across the carpet and bent over the safe.

I watched his hands throw dack the door.

"You said it was gone!" he laughed, with a quick glance over his shoulder. "See! the pearl box is here."

I could not repress the cry that bubbled to my lips. Sure enough, the pearl box was in its place, but the shekel——

He had taken the little box from the safe and was holding it in his hand.

The following moment he threw back the lid with its familiar snap and I ran forward.

"It is back," said he, looking up at me. "See! the tainted shekel is here."

Yes, in the bottom of the pearl box reposed the silver coin with its world of history.

It had come back and I found myself gazing straight at it, unable to utter a word.

The strange man lifted the coin from the box and held it closer to the light.

"Come and see the stain of blood upon it," he said, in low tones. "It has never vanished since those times"

A chill, like of ice, ran over my frame. What! the blood of the Christ on the coin of Judas after nineteen hundred years? The suicide of the traitor had not washed it out.

As he held the coin in the light, I saw on one side a dark spot on the surface. The rim of it touched the bowl of the vase within the Hebraic inscription.

Pilate—if I may so call my companion—laughed as he looked into my face.

"You have never touched it?" said he

"But once, the time it rolled from the box to the floor, when I picked it up."

"Has Violet ever touched it?"

"She has taken it in her hands."

"It is strange that the spot did not vanish. The legend says that the touch of a virgin shall wipe out the stain of the traitor sin."

I did not speak, but gazed speechless at the silver piece in the dark palm.

"By what magic," I asked, at last, "did the coin come back?"

"By the dark magic of the Orient—by the magic of the days of the priesthood."

"Then Caiaphas lives and watches over the coin he paid to Judas?"

My words sent a thrill to the man's heart. He gave a quick start and hastily replaced the coin in the box. The lid closed down with another snap.

"What have you discovered?" he demanded.

"I have been in the house of the man of mystery. I have seen Semphroni tonight."

"The—old scoundrel?"

I marveled at his words, but kept my tongue.

"What did he tell you?"

"Nothing."

"Did he show you the little room in the upper story?"

"No."

"Ha! ha! The old viper! Then you came away without looking into this new Bluebeard's chamber."

"I did not cross the threshold of that room."

"No? Then you know nothing of what is there."

"I am wholly ignorant of the secret it holds, if it holds one."

The young man pushed the door of the steel safe shut. He turned upon me with a face suddenly grown pallid, almost deathly in its strangeness.

"The day after tomorrow is the fatal fifth of October," said he. "It is the day of doom unless——"

He checked himself and threw a hurried glance toward the door.

"Some one is in the house," he went on. "I cannot tell you any more. You will wait and meet the person below. Girl, this is the last chapter of the Cross. The accursed shekel, after the fifth will be harmless. Then the stain of blood upon its surface will vanish."

"Do you mean that it will then be taken back to Jerusalem and placed beside its mates?"

"Time will tell. But she awaits you below."

I saw him spring to the wall farthest from the door and vanish.

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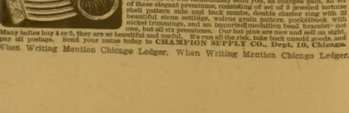

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Then I knew how the shekel had disappeared from the steel safe.

Did Violet know of the secret doors of the house? Even to her it must be a place of mystery.

I looked at the seemingly solid wall a moment and then crossed the room.

Springing down the corridor that led to the head of the stair, I leaned over the banisters. There was something lying in a heap in the hall below.

My limbs for a second, seemed to lose every particle of strength, but I called it back and darted down the steps. What did I see on the carpet in the lower hall? It was a human figure. It was half doubled up, just as it had fallen and as I, with a cry bent over it and turned the head to one side, I gasped.

Violet Haskell had come home!

CHAPTER XV.

I GET POSSESSION OF THE PEARL BOX.

Yes, Violet had some home.

I stood for a moment over the inanimate form of my friend and felt my heart beat as it had never beat before.

At last I raised the form and bore it into the nearest chamber.

There I set about restoring Violet to consciousness and at length had the satisfaction of seeing her revive.

She gazed up into my face, almost touching hers and for a little while did not realize where she was. But gradually, old scenes came back, fastening themselves upon her mind and she became communicative.

The story that I heard from her lips almost passed belief.

She had quitted the Haskell House upon the instigation of a letter which told her that she was needed at a certain place in the city, to meet a friend who had just arrived and who had matters of the utmost importance to communicate.

Not knowing what these matters might be, she dressed hurriedly and, not expecting me home, had left the house.

Her mind still distraught over the death of her father and, filled with the events which followed, she reached the house to find herself in the hands of Professor Semphroni.

Of this man, she had heard but little.

What she had heard mystified her and she was forced to quit the place.

In a short time she found herself within the walls of Semphroni's house.

The cool-headed scoundrel at once shut her up in a room on the second floor.

She was a prisoner in the place, with escape impossible, for when she tried the doors she found them locked.

Her meals were served by a woman who, from Violet's description, was Julia Crewe.

I now felt that the English woman was a tool in the hands of the conspirators and told Violet so.

Now that she was home once more we conferred how to outwit the plotters, who undoubtedly were after more than the accursed coin of Judas.

Violet was hardly herself while she narrated her adventures. I told her how I met Harold and the man who had crouched underneath the rose bush and she drew back and turned pale.

Suddenly a noise sounded on our ears and I sprang into the hall.

At the head of the stairs stood Julia Crewe!

The dark eyes of the tall English woman were fastened on me from the first.

She started a little when she saw me and then deliberately came down the steps.

The light shone full in her face and I marked it well.

"What is it?" I demanded, placing myself firmly between the foot of the stair and the door that led into the room.

Julia Crewe stopped on the lest step and leaned toward me.

"Your mistress? She is in the house?"

I started.

Then they knew that Violet had escaped.

Doubtless Semphroni had sent the woman to the place in search of my friend.

I could imagine Violet listening at the door for she was within hearing of the strident voice of the English woman.

"She is at home," I said.

"I want her."

I became firmer than ever.

"She will remain where she is," I went on, seeing that the only way to beat this determined creature was by a show of resoluteness equal to her own.

"My friend will stay where she is," I proceeded. "She is out of the hands of the cabal——"

Down to the floor came the tall woman.

I thought for a moment that she would fly at me like a tigress, but instead, she drew back a little.

"Miss Haskell belongs to my master!" she said at last, with the low cunning of a woman intent on playing her desperate game to the end.

"She belongs to her self."

"What, do you bar my progress?"

"You have no right to this house."

Julia Crewe made out to advance a step and then suddenly threw her hands to her face.

"Is the spell broken?" she cried, through them. "Am I no longer the mistress of the Temple."

Like a flash I thought I saw through the whole infamous thing.

Professor Semphroni had this woman in his power; he had created her "Mistress of the Temple" by his lying words and she had believed.

"You, too, are in the hands of this man," said I. "You are to be pitied, Miss Crewe."

Julia fell back against the wall.

She gazed at me white-faced and trembling and then with a low, half articulate cry sank at my feet an unconscious mass.

The cry that parted my lips at this moment roused Violet.

In another moment she was at my side.

"'Tis my jaileress!" cried she. "This is the woman I encountered in Semphroni's house."

Together we carried Julia from the hall and into the room just vacated by Violet.

As her right arm dropped alongside the sofa, Violet gave a little cry.

"What is that strange mark?" she exclaimed.

On the white flesh of Julia's arm I saw as I gazed, the counterfeit of the accursed shekel!

Was it the sign of the Children of the Temple?

We bent lower and examined it closely. Nothing was missing. We saw the verse and the inscription on the quivering flesh as perfect as if the whole had been photographed there.

Of our inspection, Julia of course was ignorant. By and by we took her to another part of the house and locked her in one of the upper rooms.

"We will destroy the coin!" cried I.

Violet drew back at this.

"I dare not!" she exclaimed. "Never again can I touch the piece fraught with so much of the world's great tragedy."

I felt, that in the destruction of the Judas legacy, lay our happiness.

It reposed in the steel safe for it had come back as I had seen.

Up the broad stairs I bounded, intent on carrying out my suddenly formed purpose.

The door of the room yielded to my touch.

Across the threshold I paused and gazed at the safe. The door of the treasury was closed.

A cry from me brought Violet to my side.

"Let it remain where it is," she said, in answer to my look. "It cannot escape us now."

"No, dear. It must go!"

Violet went over to her father's desk and found the combination and in a moment was back again.

"You must do it, Perdita," she said, as she stopped in front of the safe.

I waited breathless for her to open the steel door and the moment it swung back I sprang forward.

The mother of pearl box was the only thing I saw now.

I snatched it from the safe. Clutching it in my hands I fell back with a look of triumph at Violet's pallid face.

"Make sure of it," I heard her say.

"I will. This is the last of the legacy of crime. This is the end of the Judas coin."

The box seemed to burn my hand. My skin seemed to shrivel beneath the accursed legacy that had brought about so much misery and degradation.

"Remain!" I cried to Violet. "Look after our prisoner in the octagon chamber."

With this I sprang away. Down the steps almost wild I went with the pearl box. The carpet seemed hot under my feet. I heard no noise behind me, saw nothing ahead but the river underneath the stars.

Beneath its waves, I thought, the sin of the centuries should rest forever.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN THE TOILS AND OUT AGAIN.

The river wind fanned my face as I turned into a street that ended at one of the wharves.

Not for a moment had the pearl box left my touch.

There was something in its contact that filled me with a nameless dread and ferocious desire.

"Away with it!" my inner conscience said. "Throw it in the water and let it sink a thousand fathoms out of sight."

On, on, with the wind in my face and my brain aflame.

Never in my life had I carried such a burden. But it was for Violet's sake. It was to save her from the fifth of October, for I believed that with the coin buried in the river, the doom would pass and leave for her a cloudless sky.

On, still on!

If hundreds looked at me I heeded them not. If many stopped and wondered what lent speed to my feet and whiteness to my face, I little cared, so I could destroy the evidence of the false disciple's sin.

At last I caught sight of the river boats. I saw the nocturnal glitter of the waters of the river. The sounds that filled my ears as I neared the wharf did not turn me back.

Suddenly I came to a halt and looked ahead.

I caught sight of a puffing tug as it came up stream with a great dark object in its wake.

This object grew larger as it came on and far a moment I seemed to forget the precious box I carried.

But it was only for a moment.

Clutching the box again, I bounded to the very edge of the wharf.

"Now," cried I. "This is the last of the infernal box of death!"

I drew it from beneath the fold of my garment. It seemed red hot in my hand.

As I raised it above my head, I cried out that my act would free Violet and was in the act of flinging it far out from me, when my wrist was clutched as with a grip of steel.

The cry that welled from my throat seemed my last. I turned to confront the person who had caught me and looked into the face of Pilate.

"You?" I gasped and my arm fell to my side.

"Why not?" he grinned. "Girl, you know not what you would do."

"I would hurl from me the accursed box and its money!" I replied. "It has cursed the world long enough. It is the Judas legacy. It is the coin of fate. It stands between the woman I serve and her happiness."

His grip did not relax. On the contrary the fingers seemed to sink deeper into my flesh.

"Come with me," he said. "I will show you the foolishness of your act."

"You?"

"Why not?"

Something, perhaps the strangeness of his look, seemed to hold me spellbound.

I became like a lamb in his power. The eyes that looked me through had in them the spell of the hypnotist. I could not resist

Ten minutes later I stood facing him in a little room. He sat in a chair watching me with those strange orbs of his as if he would read the inmost thoughts of my perturbed soul.

"Child," said he, "you know not what you do."

"Then tell me."

He walked across the floor, turned quickly and silently on his heel and came back to me.

The hue of his countenance had changed. The eyes had another look, but the old spell remained.

Slowly he drew forth the pearl box and placed it on the table.

"It's a pretty box," said he. "The same old Sir Mortimer Haskell brought from the Holy Land."

"The coin was in it then?"

"Yes."

"How did the first Haskell get possession of it?"

"He outwitted the Children of the Temple."

"Tell me," I cried, "why did they preserve those thirty pieces? Was not their crime enough to bury them forever from the world's eyes?"

"It was very great," he answered. "It was the greatest crime on the world's calendar."

"And you are the reincarnated Pontius Pilate?"

At this, a smile came to his lips. I saw a glitter in his eyes I had not seen before.

Was he an imposter, like I now believed Semphroni to be? Was it, after all, a make up for a purpose, a dark deception worthy of the worst scoundrels that ever lived?

"Look!" he drew up his sleeve and I leaned forward.

On his arm I saw the same tattoo I had noticed on Julia Crewe's flesh.

"The accursed coin!" cried I, drawing back.

"Yes, girl."

"You all have it."

"You have seen it before?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"On the arm of Julia Crewe."

"The wife of Herod!"

I could not repress a laugh at this. Could charlatanism go further?

"That English girl the wife of Herod?" I exclaimed. "Come! This is all a great imposture."

"Do not deceive yourself, girl," he answered. "You do not know the mysteries of the years."

With the last word he crossed the room and raised his hand till it was almost on a level with his head.

In another moment as his finger touched the wall, I saw a little door open. It was not larger than my wedded hands.

"More black art!" I cried, imperiously. "Give me back the box and let me destroy the coin."

I started toward the table with my gaze riveted on the pearl box, but his hand intervened.

"Wait," said he, scarcely above a whisper. "I will show you."

To my horror there shot from the hole in the wall the flaming head of a serpent. I saw the ghastly eyes, the open fangs, the long tongue that shot back and forth as I thought, straight at me and felt my blood grow cold.

"What is that?" I exclaimed.

"It is the serpent of doom! It is the serpent that crawled through the garden where Judas took his own life after his treachery. You haven't yet seen all."

"I have seen enough," I said. "Give me the box!"

I beat down his hand with all the force I could summon for my desperate purpose. I even caught him by the shoulder and forced him back from where he stood his ground.

He whirled half way around the table. With a desperate effort I threw him from me. He caught on a tear in the carpet and fell against the wall.

My time had come.

Quick as thought, I turned and caught up the pearl box. It was mine once more.

Holding it fast in my hands I cast one look at the man on the floor and bounded toward the door.

"The river! the river!" echoed through my brain. "Heaven guide me to the waters of oblivion for the Judas box."

Down the steps I went. The door below yielded to my touch and opened. But the next moment I fell back with a cry, for there stood before me the head of the cabal, Semphroni. Even this wretch of darkness did not check me, for I sprang past him with a startling cry and dashed riverward, once more.

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There are others: "Redder," "rotator," "shahs," "sexes," "level," "minim," but the strangest are those which, not being palindromes themselves, lend their aid in the construction of a palindromic sentence. The following is a good example: "Desserts I desire not, so long no lost one rise distressed."

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JOKES AND

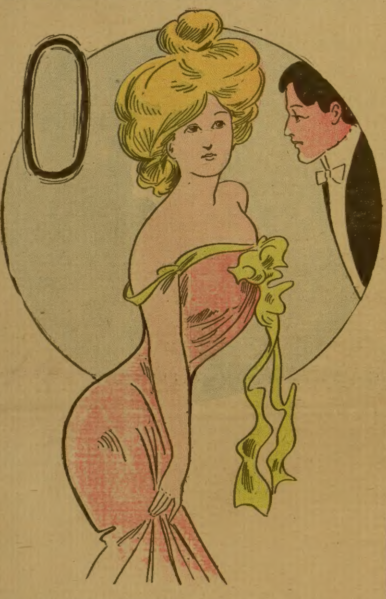
Hard-Hearted.

"I'm afraid of the lightning," remarked the fair maid.

"No wonder," rejoined the young man, who had failed to make an impression. You have a heart of steel."

Down on the Old Man.

The children are always glad that father didn't marry his first love, being perfectly satisfied with their mother, but they always have a notion they would have been better off if mother had married hers.

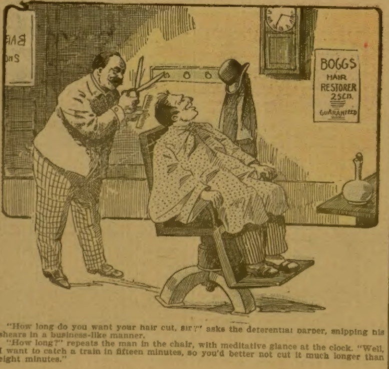


Miss Bleeker—If you are troubled with the toothache so often, I'd think you would consult a dentist.

Mr. Meeker—I did call on one the other day and I certainly experienced great relief.

"Did he pull the tooth?"

"No; he wasn't in."



"How long do you want your hair cut, sir?" asks the deferential barber, snipping his shears in a business-like manner.

"How long?" repeats the man in the chair, with meditative glance at the clock. "Well, I want to catch a train in fifteen minutes, so you'd better not cut it much longer than eight minutes."

THANKSGIVING PSALM

A Rhythmical and Grateful Chant.

A teacher in a Terre Haute public school, joins in the chorus:

"Teaching is a business which requires a great deal of brain and nerve force. Unless this force is renewed as fast as expended the teacher is exhausted before the close of the year. Many resort to stimulating tonics for relief.

"For 3 years I struggled against this almost complete exhaustion, getting what relief I could from doctor's tonics. Then in the spring of 1903, I had an attack of la grippe and malaria which left me too weak to continue my work. Medicine failed to give me any relief, a change of climate failed. I thought I should never be able to go back in school again.

"I ate enough food, (the ordinary meals, white bread and vegetables) but was hungry after meals.

"I happened at this time to read an article giving the experience of another teacher who had been helped by Grape-Nuts food. I decided to try Grape-Nuts and cream, as an experiment. It was a delightful experience, and continues so after a year and a half of constant use.

"First, I noticed that I was not hungry after meals.

"In a few days that tired feeling left me, and I felt fresh and bright, instead of dull and sleepy.

"In three months, more than my usual strength returned, and I had gained 15 pounds in weight.

"I finished the year's work without any kind of tonics—was not absent from duty even half a day.

"Am still in the best of health, with all who know me wondering at the improvement.

"I tell them all, 'Try Grape-Nuts!'" Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

There's a reason.

At Our Boarding House.

"Kicking again, gentlemen?" exclaimed the landlady in injured tones. "Why, you are unreasonable. This steak can't be beat."

"There's no doubt about that, chuckled the comedian boarder; "You couldn't make an impression on it if you beat it all day with a club."

A Dainty Little Maid.

Everyone ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella or when you can do without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller for agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to anyone. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 78 Dearborn St., Chicago.

Out West.

Passenger—This train is nearly one hour behind time, is it not?

Guard—Yes, but that's all right. We'll get in in the usual time.

Passenger—What time is that?

Guard—Two hours later.

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Their Finish.

Gunner—There is certainly something about an American heiress that reminds me of a pugilist in the ring.

Guyer—Strange combination. What is the resemblance?

Gunner—When she takes the count she loses.

Part of the Machinery

"Are you chief engineer of this concern?" ased an excited individual of the sub-editor.

"No, sir, I'm not the engineer; I'm the boiler."

And he proceeded to "boil down" six sheets of matter into a note of six lines.

Hard to Part.

Gunner—Wise men tell us that love is a disease.

Guyer—Sort of a lingering disease.

Gunner—Why do you call it lingering?

Guyer—Did you ever see two lovers kissing good-night in a doorway?

JOLLITY

Out of the Mouths of Babes.

Sunday School Teacher—If angry with another little boy, what should you do before speaking, Tommy?

Tommy—Sit on him and then count a hundred.

"Mamma," said little Elmer, "I don't think I ought to study 'rithmetic."

"Why, not, dear?"

"'Cause," explained Elmer, "it's full of horrible examples."

The father of 4-year-old Bessie is a traveling man, and during his absence recently, a new baby arrived. Upon his return home a few days later, Bessie met him at the door and exclaimed: "Oh, papa, you can't guess who was born while you were away!"

Little Leland and Jeannette are cousins and live in the same house. Jeannette went to Waukesha on a visit. On her return, Leland asked her if she had been to Sunday school.

"Yes," she answered, "and a little boy there winked at me, but I didn't wink back."

"Huh!" said Leland. "I know why. It was 'cause you didn't know how!"

Wonderful Thing.

Mr. Brown had just had a telephone connection between his office and house, and was very much pleased with it.

"I tell you Smith," he was saying, "this telephone business is a wonderful thing. I want you to dine with me this evening, and I will notify Mrs. Brown to expect you."

Brown (speaking through the telephone)—My friend Smith will dine with us this evening.

"Now listen and hear how plain her reply comes back."

Mrs. Brown's reply came back with startling distinctness:

"Ask your friend Smith if he thinks we keep a hotel."

Discouraged Him.

"Yes, he confessed that he loved me, but I tried to discourage him in every way I knew how. Once he dared to kiss me."

"And you screamed, Jeanette?"

"Well—er—not then, but I warned him that I would the next time. Then he kissed me again."

"Surely you called for help?"

"How could I when I was so startled? Presently he slipped his arm around me."

"And you drew away?"

"No, I nestled closer—er—that is—but really, dear, I tried to discourage him; yes, I tried hard."

She Knew Her Business.

He had been sweet on her for some time and one evening he dropped in on his way home from the office.

"I hope you will excuse me for calling in my business suit," he said, "but——"

"Oh, that's all right," interrupted the fair maid, "that is, if you mean business."

And the next day a downtown jeweler separated him from a month's salary in exchange for the ring.

More Appropriate.

The district attorney was about to summon another witness in the great blackmailing trial.

"I can't get his real name," said the attorney, "but I'll just put him down as John Doe."

"But he has so much money," ventured the assistant, "suppose we put him down as John Dough?"

His Periodical.

They stood on the old porch watching the red, full moon climbing over the water.

"Dear me!" said the girl. "I wonder why the moon is always redder when it is full?"

"'Sh!" whispered the tall young chap at her side. "That is just the man in the moon's nose that we see."

AGENTS WANTED

LADIES I MAKE
FROM $18.00 TO $30.00 PER WEEK
and want you to have the same opportunity. The work is very pleasant and will pay you handsomely for even your spare time. I speak from experience, as I have often made $10 in a single day. This is no deception. I want no money and will gladly send full particulars *free* to all. If you are interested write to me at once. Address
MRS. W. W. MITCHELL, Box 547, Portland, Maine.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

10 DAYS FREE TRIAL
We ship on approval, without a cent deposit, freight prepaid. DONT PAY A CENT if not satisfied after using the bicycle 10 days.
DO NOT BUY a bicycle or a pair of tires from *anyone* at *any price* until you receive our latest art catalogues illustrating and describing every kind of bicycle, and have learned our *unheard of prices* and *marvelous new offers.*
ONE CENT is all it will cost you to write a postal and everything will be sent you free postpaid by return mail. You will get much valuable information. Do not wait, write it now.
TIRES, Coaster-Brakes, Built-up-Wheels and all sundries at *half usual prices.*
MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. 53 C Chicago
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Cruel of Her.

"And if I should muster enough courage to ask you to be my wife would you say 'no'?" anxiously inquired the suitor.

"Indeed I wouldn't," replied the beautiful girl.

"Ah, at last! And why wouldn't you say 'no,' my dear?"

"Because it is too much trouble to waste words. I'd just shake my head."

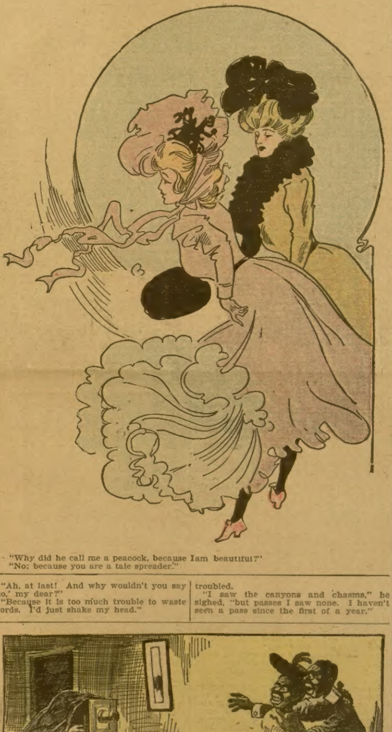
No More Deadheads.

"Ah," gushed the beautiful girl at the reception, "so you came through the famous mountains by rail. Tell me of the chasms and canyons and passes."

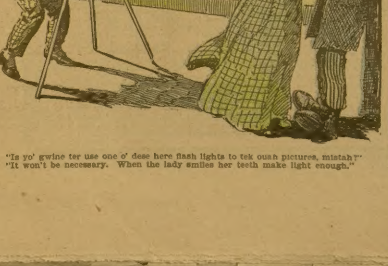
The congressman frowned and looked troubled.

"I saw the canyons and chasms," he sighed, "but passes I saw none. I haven't seen a pass since the first of a year."

DON'T BE A PEACOCK.



"Why did he call me a peacock, because I am beautiful?"
"No; because you are a tale spreader."



"Is yo' gwine ter use one o' dese here flash lights to tek ouah pictures, mistah?"
"It won't be necessary. When the lady smiles her teeth make light enough."

AGENTS WANTED

MAN WANTED
We want a man in all small towns to show and sell farms and other properties to our customers, good salary and steady position to honest men who are willing to learn the business and faithfully represent us.
NORTH AMERICAN LAND CO.,
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$37.00 Per Week and expenses, to man with rig to introduce our Poultry Goods. Send stamp. Eureka Manufacturing Co., Dept. 1, Navasota, Texas
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

XAX NUTS cure wabbles. Make old buggies run like new. Very profitable for agents. Exclusive territory. Hardware Co., Box A 56, Pontiac, Mich.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$35 A WEEK AND EXPENSES to men with rigs to introduce our Poultry Goods. JAVELLE MFG. CO., Dept. 29, Parsons, Kans
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$100 A MONTH and traveling expenses paid men to place Proteinzone (for stock and poultry) with dealers. Expenses advanced. Experience unnecessary. A, DEFIANCE CO., Parsons, Kans.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GOOD POSITIONS as salesmen now open in every State. Experience unnecessary if hustler. Steady work, good pay and promotion. Apply at once to MOROTOCK TOBACCO WORKS, Box D 13, Danville, Va.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

LADIES to do piece work at their homes; we furnish all material and pay from $7 to $12 weekly; experience unnecessary. Send stamped envelope to ROYAL CO., Dept. 55, 34 Monroe Street, CHICAGO, ILL.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WANTED 10 men in each state to travel, tack advertising signs and distribute samples of our goods. Salary $78 per month, $3.00 per day for expenses. Kuhlman Co., Dept. A, Atlas Block, Chicago
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS WANTED everywhere to sell Bassett's Native Herbs for the Blood, Liver, Kidneys, Stomach Trouble, Rheumatism and Constipation, on commission. Write today for free outfit. Address Bassett's Co., Box 27, Columbus, O.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WANTED Young men for positions, Firemen or Brakemen on big railroads. Salary, $75 to $100 a month; rapid promotion. Positions waiting good men, soon as competent. In making application write plainly, enclosing stamp. National Railway Training School, Inc., 530 Boston Block, Minneapolis, Minn.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS—IF THIS AD. CATCHES THE EYE OF A LIVE, AMBITIOUS PERSON, desirous of bettering his condition, WRITE US FOR OUR MONEY-MAKING PROPOSITION SELLING STEREOSCOPIC PHOTOGRAPHS. Let us prove that you like our other agents can make from $5 to $15 daily above expenses. Exclusive territory. GRIFFITH & GRIFFITH, 700 Abel Bldg., CHICAGO
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

$3 a Day Sure. Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day absolutely sure; we furnish the work and teach you free; you work in the locality where you live. Send us your address and we explain the business fully; remember we guarantee a clear profit of $3 for every day's work absolutely sure; write at once. ROYAL MANUFACTURING CO., Box 1301 Detroit, Mich.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Gold Watch AND RING FREE
An American Movement Watch with beautifully engraved Solid Gold Plated Case equal in appearance to a 25 year Solid Gold Filled Watch. Fully warranted to keep correct time. Also a Solid Rolled Gold Ring set with a rare Chase Gem, sparkling with the fiery brilliancy of a $50 diamond, are given absolutely Free to anyone for selling 20 pieces of our handsome jewelry at 10c each. Order 20 pieces and when sold send us the $2, and we positively send you both the watch and ring, and a chain, ladies or gents style.
ERIE MFG. CO., DEPT. 87, CHICAGO.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

AGENTS WANTED For Mend-a-Rip
Greatly improved. Better than ever. Does all kinds of light and heavy riveting and stitching. Saves its cost many times a year. A perfect Hand Sewing Machine and Riveter combined. Notice the Automatic Spacer which makes neat, even stitching. To show it means a sale. Agents make $3 to $15 a day. One agent made $20 first day and writes to hurry machines to him. Write for special agts. price. J. B. Foote Foundry Co. Dep. 114 Fredericktown, O
Can use heavy waxed end.
(*The Great Agents Supply House*)
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GET BIG MAIL Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? If so, read this advertisement very carefully. You probably know that manufacturers' supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an Agent's Directory List containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. The cost of arranging these names in suitable shape and taking care of them is considerable yet we only ask 10 cents in silver for our trouble. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. Simply enclose 10 cts. with your name and address as above stated saying you wish your name inserted in our Agent's Directory List and we will insert it in the next Directory which we are now preparing. Address
AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST, Indiana, Indiana County, Pa.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

Silver Set FREE
LADIES: This silver set is genuine double plated, government silver. Warranted not to tarnish. You cannot get an equal set for $5.00 in your local stores. You can get it free. Sell ten of our gold-plated lockets at 20 cents each, send us the $2.00 and beautiful 14-piece set is yours. These lockets are imitation diamond set, and hang from 22 inch chain. We will reduce photo for each one free. You do not have to ask people to buy these goods. Plan to secure 26-piece silver set, or chiffonier without canvassing or expense. Write at once.
THE COLONIAL CO., Dept. M, CHICAGO, ILL.
When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

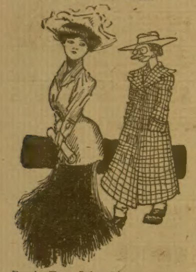
FARM WANTED

Will pay fair price for good sized farm in good section, soil must be first class. Will take large or small place if it suits, will bargain for machinery and stock. Give description and lowest price. I want the best I can get for my money. I want possession in May or October. Will deal with owners only, real estate men need not answer. Address

Box 980, Minneapolis, Minn.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

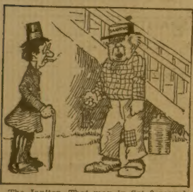
The Come-Back.



Reggie—Yaas, I bought this suit ready made, just for a joke.

Miss Pepper—Well, the joke's on you.

The Only Way.



The Janitor—That man in flat 2 says he must have more room.

The Owner of the Apartment House—Then tell him to scrape the paper off the walls.

Special Privilege.

Mother—Eddie, you've been a very good boy and haven't quarreled or fought or done anything bad for a long, long time, and now, as this is your birthday, what would make you happy?

Eddie—Please, ma, I'd like to lick Billy Jones today.

A WEAK MAN

My Dear Brother: If Worry, Dissipation or Hard Work has worn you out; if the Errors or Excesses of youth or early manhood have unstrung your nerves or sapped your energies; if Advancing Age has weakened your powers; or if Varicocele, Weak Organs, Lost Ambition, Nervousness, Failing Virility, or Bladder or Kidney Troubles bother you at any age, I want to tell you on my honor as a man that

Beck's Wonder-Workers for Men

used one tablet at a dose, three times a day, at home, or at your work, will **cure you** easier, quicker and cheaper than any other remedy in the world, and certainly prepare you anew for the duties and pleasures of a full and perfect manhood. My successful career of eight years at the same old stand proves that I am **not** a quack, fraud or fakir. Think of the record!—only 12 complaints (every one of which was made good) in 8 years, during which over 600,000 Weak Men of all ages were made strong, and the largest mail-order medicine business in the world built up. My **Wonder-Workers** do **not** contain poison, and the price is **only one dollar** per box, always cash with order, by ex. at your expense. If you send $1.15 I send it by mail sealed and prepaid. When you order please **mention this paper.** Sincerely your friend,

GEO. S. BECK, 144 Main St., Springfield, OHIO

Hon. Asa S. Bushnell said: "There is no squarer man living than Geo. S. Beck."

Dr. J. A. West says: "I use Wonder-Workers in my practice. It is the best of all, and perfectly safe to use under any circumstances."

Thousands of cured men say, "best on earth."

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WHILE SHE WAS BLIND;

Or, Back From the Realms of Night.

By ERNEST De LANCY PIERSON.

[Copyright by the Author.]

Begun in No. 12, March 24. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XV.

A FORLORN HOPE.

The shops were gay with Christmas wares, and the air was frosty, as Marcia walked to her poor home. Groups of excited chattering children stood about the windows that were wreathed with green and filled with bright toys. Poor little girls in scantily, thin clothing, gazed longingly at the wondrous dolls, with their rosy cheeks and golden curls and satin robes, trimmed with lace. What visions of beauty to the poor little shivering creatures! How Marcia longed for money, that she might see the rapture of some of them over the toys she would buy for them!

Oh! what a dreary Christmas for her! She was so weary of her life, that it seemed to her she would gladly give it up on this Christmas Eve, when happier mortals found so much joy in sweet home ties. She was alone! There was no one who bid her to the Christmas feast. Times were very hard with poor Mrs. Webb, and Marcia felt that, although she gave her all her poor earnings, she was a burden on her.

The shop was not very festive in appearance as Marcia went in that night. There were a few extra oranges and apples and one wreath. Mrs. Webb had no spare money to stock it.

"And ye needn't hang up narry stockin'," the good woman was saying to the little group, "'cause I ain't got a quarter to spare!"

"Oh, mammie," cried the youngest girl, "Santa Claus has got plenty things! No matter 'bout you!"

"Oh, you goosey!" cried the elder. "There ain't no such thing as Santa Claus!"

And at once a noisy dispute arose, which ended in their mother boxing their ears.

"Humph! Ye got a Christmas box, any way;" said Laff, in derision, wherewith both turned upon him.

"I've got something for you, Laff," called Marcia with a sudden thought.

She knew how much a boy prizes a pocket knife, and she had just recollected that she had a very fine one in her trunk. His eyes bulged when he saw it—pearl-handled, with many shining blades. Then he laid it down on the table.

"What's the matter? Don't you like it?" Marcia asked.

"Yes. It's a beaut! None of the boys got one like that—but, "eyeing the treasure mournfully, "I don't deserve it!"

"Why, yes you do," urged Marcia. "You do all my errands. I couldn't get along without you!"

"I'm—I'm a sneak!" said Laff, somthering a sob. "I done you mean!"

Marcia looked at him with surprise. "Tell me, Laff," she said gently. "I'll forgive you beforehand."

"Know that letter ye give me to post—when ye fust came?"

"Yes." Marcia's heart beat fast, and her cheeks grew red.

"Lost it!" gasped Laff.

"What?"

"Lost it! Must have got trampled in the mud!"

"Oh, Laff!" cried the poor girl, the tears springing to her eyes, "You have given me many miserable days!"

"I oughter be thrashed," said Laff, penitently.

"If you had told me at once!"

"'Fraid!" muttered the boy. "Say, can't you write again, and make it straight?",

"I must think," said Marcia, in a bewildered way; "but take the knife, Laff. You have done a good deal for me, though you failed once! You have been my little friend all along, dear boy!"

Laff's heart swelled with grateful affection. "I ain't never goin' to fail you again, you bet!" he said, as he clutched the knife, and ran off to show his prize.

Marcia sat motionless when he was gone. Then she rose with sudden resolution and put on her hat and cloak. To think that she had let foolish pride keep her apart from Ralph so long! Pride and vain suspicions! And what must Ralph have thought of her silence?

Her heart beat fast as she hurried through the crowded streets. She would not trust to a letter this time—she would see him face to face. As she neared the place, though, her steps faltered. If—if he were changed? No, no! She would not believe it.

She climbed the steps. She had visited his studio before, and knew the way. She knocked on the door, and her heart seemed to stand still as she waited.

No one responded. There was silence in the rooms.

Marcia turned away in discouragement. Then she noticed a strange name on the door. A chill froze the blood in her veins.

"Was you a-lookin' for some one?" asked a voice behind her.

Marcia turned and faced a pleasant-looking German woman.

"Mr. Ralph Dunstan," she faltered.

"Eh? Guess he don't vos here in my time. I'm janitress by dis blace most vive months. Oh, I tink Mrs. Ross tell me 'bout dis young man! He go vay to be married. He go by Europe mit his bride. He go to marry much gold."

"Are you sure?" asked Marcia, growing pale and leaning against the door for support.

"Yes. Dere is no oder gone. All der rest joost the same but dis one. Mrs. Ross tole me 'bout dat, and she laff. He vas so hard in lofe, she said. Vell, dat is der way of de vorld—ain't id?" And the woman smiled indulgently. "Dey gits ofer it," she added, as if it were some disease.

"Thank you," said Marcia, in a dazed was, as she made her way blindly down the stairs and out into the cold streets once more. So black, so desolate must her life be in all the days to come!

And it was Christmas Eve—the time of joy to so many, the time of family reunions, of warm hand-clasps and fonder greetings—and she was all alone in the great city! "And I shall be all alone until I die!" she moaned, as she made her way to her poor little room, and threw herself on the bed in an agony of tears.

Her room! Why, she felt she had no right even to that refuge! She owed it to Mrs. Webb's charity! That was a bitter thought. She racked her brain to think of some relief, but her mind would wander to Ralph. He must be happy with his new love at this holiday season. They were doubtless in some gay city in the Old World, so full of poetry and romance. Perhaps they were sailing in a gondola in Venice, where the moonlight on the water made a path of silver for their boat; or it might be that Rome, the city of the soul, claimed them. Had Ralph ever a thought of her? Did the past never haunt him? Did he look into the eyes of his new love with the same fervor as he had shown in other days for her? Did he remember his broken vows?

"Come now," said Mrs. Webb, as she brought her a cup of coffee in the morning. "You're a-frettin' too much. I know how 'tis. These 'ere holiday's when there's such good times goin' and we not in it, is aggervatin'! I feel it myself. Wouldn't I like to have gone out last night and filled them poor chicks' stockin's with pretty things? And now the best I could do was a peppermint stick and an apple apiece. Laws! I don't let myself think— and you musn't! I know you are a-pinin' after that man critter, and they ain't one on 'em wuth shucks! Don't say a word, though. I got a surprise for the poor kids. I've got a turkey—a real big fat fellow. My cousin, Si Collins sent it over this mornin', and not a soul knows it. They think they got to eat salt pork for their Christmas. Now they shall feast for once, bless 'em! And you got to rouse up an help us out, missy!"

CHAPTER XVI.

"AND THE EARTH ROCKED.

The winter was over. There was a breath of spring in the air as Marcia walked into Central Park, where Humboldt's statue guards the gate. Some sparrows were twittering about his head, and they gave bright, side-long glances as they noted the young girl in black, but they did not fly away.

"Happy birds!" thought Marcia, as she sank into a seat. "They have no board bills to pay, and they can wear their feather ulsters all the year round."

Then some words of the Holy Writ floated through her brain: "Are ye not of more value than many sparrows?"

The winter had worn away at last. The dreary days were over, but though all the world was waking to new life, there seemed no change for her. And now, this very morning, poor Mrs. Webb had told her that she would have to give up the place and look for something cheaper. She would have no spare room in the new home, and she was grieved to say it. She had taken Marcia in her motherly arms and wept.

Marcia sat in the park, absorbed in her own misery, scarcely seeing the groups that passed her. At last her eyes rested somewhat vaguely upon a beautiful child who was running here and there, her long, dark curls, floating in the breeze. She was daintily dressed in white cloth, trimmed with ermine, and a great hat with showy plumes, rested upon her pretty head. The next moment, Marcia caught her breath. The child was running about carelessly among the horses' feet. She did not look at them, but moved like one who is walking in her sleep. A pair of prancing grays was almost upon her, but she showed no fright.

Marcia sprang forward to seize her. No one else seemed to note the child's danger. As she reached her, she heard her cry in a petulant voice: "Aunt Selah! Oh, Aunt Selah!"

"Come," said Marcia, quietly. "We will go and look for your aunt. But you shouldn't go in the middle of the road. It is dangerous! Didn't you see those great prancing horses?"

The child turned at her voice. "Horses?" "Yes, I can hear them, but I can't see them. I can't see anything. I am blind!"

"Oh, poor little thing!" cried Marcia, looking into the glowing child face with infinite pity, as she led the little one to the safety of the seat she had left.

"But where is that aunt you were calling?" she asked gently.

"I don't know. She went to get me a drink of water. She stayed too long—seben 'leven hours! Drat her yaller hide! She oughter be whipped!"

Marcia saw that the angel child had a temper.

"What a naughty way to talk of your Aunt!" she said. "Ladies are not whipped!"

"She ain't a lady. She's black!" said the angel child.

"Your Aunt is black?" cried Marcia, in a puzzled voice.

"Dood sakes, ain't you stupid! She's my nurse 'cose she's black! She told me to sit still till she came back, nassy fing! Got cramps sittin' still!"

Marcia felt sure that something had happened to the nurse, but she gave no hint of her fears. "Where are papa and mamma?" she asked.

"Papa's dead," said the child. "Mama's got no one but me, and I got no one but her, and I'm her pearl and her star and her rosebud!"

"But do you live in New York—in this city?"

"Wese des a-stayin' here—live long ways off. We go in choo-choo cars!"

"And where do you stay here?"

"Oh, I know! Drate big hotel, and it's named des like the soap Aunt Selah washes me with—Windsor. That's how I remember."

"And what is your name, dearie?"

"My name is Milly Mo."

"Milly what?"

"Milly Mo! Is you deef?"

Marcia concluded that the child's name was Milly More, as she had heard Southerners drop the r in words before.

"Oh, now I know your name and where you live, it will be quite easy to find mamma. But we will wait a little while for your nurse, because she will be so frightened if she does not find you."

"I want her frightened," said the angel child. "I want her frightened mos to deff, I ain't goin' to wait forever, never, 'cause Aunt Selah told me to, like that boy that stood on the burnin' deck. Orful silly he was! Let hisself get all burned up! Might have known his papa didn't mean that!"

"I should say so!"

"Mamma reads lots to me, as I can't read for myself yet. One of these days she's goin' to get me blind books. Blind books are all raised up so you can feel the letters. Tell me a story now, right away. I want to be amoosed."

Marcia tried to think of something, but for a moment her mind was a blank.

"Don't you know any hobble stories?" cried the child, impatiently.

"Hobble stories?" repeated Marcia, in a puzzled voice.

"Oh, you is stupid!" stamping her foot. "Hobble stories—like 'bout kings that had their heads cut off and queens that had their head cut off!"

Marcia understood, but did not incline toward presenting a feast of horrors at present.

"Oh 'bout hobgoblins, with great eyes and purple hair, what walks 'bout with their heads under their arms."

Marcia said, "No," quite decidedly.

"Doodness sakes! Aunt Selah knows more'n you! Didn't you ever hear 'bout—

> " 'Three little gostesses,
> A-sittin' on three postesses,
> Eatin' buttered toastesses?' "

"No, I never did, but I will tell you a real true story. It's in the Bible—perhaps you have heard it before."

"The Bible?" asked Milly. "What's that?"

Marcia hardly knew how to answer. "You must have seen a Bible at your house," she began. Then she remembered that the child could not see.

"It's what the minister reads in church," she added.

"Church? Oh, I heard Selah and the rest talk 'bout church. Church is for niggers, ain't it?"

"I'll tell you about it while I take you home," said Marcia. "We won't wait any longer. Mama will be getting anxious."

The lovely, delicate face and sweet, unseeing eyes were turned eagerly towards her, as she told the child the story of Joseph and his brethern. The little home heathen listened with great interest.

"If I'd been Joseph and, those wicked brothers come to me, I'd a-whipped 'em, and whipped 'em and whipped 'em. Yes! I'd have sent food to my papa, but none for wicked brothers! Joseph was a softy!"

Marcia was almost sorry to see the great hotel looming before her. The little hand nestling in her own, warmed her heart.

"Now, you must come and see mamma!" cried the child. "You can't go away. I want you to stay with me, 'cause your voice is sweet, and you must know lots of stories. I know all Aunt Selah's by heart. Yes, you got to stay! I gotter have everything I want! Doctor says I must, 'cause my heart's weak."

A tall graceful young woman, gowned in pale lavender and lace, appeared to be watching at the entrance with anxious face.

"Oh, mamma," cried Milly, as she sprang into her arms, "Aunt Selah runned away, and the horses was goin' to trample on me. And I want her to stay here! She's got no papa and no mamma! She said so. I want her!"

Mrs. Moore was full of grateful thanks. She insisted on believing that Marcia had saved her darling's life. She prided herself on reading faces and being a good judge of human nature. When she found that Marcia wished to earn her living, she insisted on her coming as Milly's governess and companion.

"It's not that she can learn much, poor darling!" said the mother, with a sigh. "She will have to be taught by talks to her; but I have been feeling for some months that she is too much with the servants. She catches their phrases, and gives me a shock now and then. Perhaps you will not want to leave your friends—I live near Charleston."

"I have no relatives," said Marcia, feeling that Providence had provided this new home. "I shall be glad to go, but I have no references. I have never had a position."

"No matter! I like you. You shall come if you will." So the matter was settled.

Mrs. Webb rejoiced in Marcia's good fortune, but all the children shed tears when she said good bye.

Aunt Selah came back in time for the journey. She had been knocked down by a horse and stunned. During her unconsciousness she had been conveyed to a hospial.

"I was mad clar trough when I wake up in dat hospittle!" Aunt Selah declared. "Dey want ter keep me, but I des jawed 'em de 'durin' time. Whafo' I stay dar, when dey ain't no bones bruk? Tell ye, I mek it onpleasant for dat strained nuss!

And along and at lass, she say she ain't gwine stand sech conditions, and she sent me home."

Aunt Selah looked at Marcia with some jealousy. When she heard the child learning a little prayer, she sniffed and tossed her head.

"Oder folks got some religion too," she said, acidly, "but dey ain't nevah bin 'lowed to learn lil missy nothin', 'cause Miss Betty done sot herself pintedly 'gin it. She gone clar outer her mind. When Marse Hal die sudden't, and when lil missey go bline, she say, 'Dar ain't no God—a lovin father dohn grind down his children dat a-way!' So lil missy never yered 'bout God, no more dan de heathen in his kindness dat bows down to wooden stone."

Milly talked a great deal about her uncle Dick, who was to join them in Charleston. They stopped for a few days at one of the large hotels to wait for him

Dick is the dearest fellow!" confided Mrs More, to Marcia. "He is my only brother, and he tries to bear all my burdens."

"Look a-heah, yaller gal," cried aunt Selah, in the next room, "des you tell dat niggah dat's a-rampagin' 'roun wid dem trunks upstairs, to make less noise!"

"Why, dey ain't no one movin' trunks'" cried the girl, coming back, in a dazed way.

"Dohn tell me!" cried aunt Selah, indignantly. "What's a-shakin' dis ole rattletrap of a hotel lake dat yer? Des feel it rock!"

The girl grew ashen pale. There was a tremor through the whole great building, as if it were quivering at some secret terror.

"De lass day!" she moaned, as she dropped on her knees. "Oh, Lord, have mussy!"

A pallor spread over Lelah's fat face She felt numb for a moment. People were hurrying through the halls. She heard one fearful word

"Oh, Miss Betty!" she cried, bursting into the room, her eyes bulging with fright. "We gotter run fer our lives! Quick, quick! Dars a yearthquake, and its quakin' here, right now!"

CHAPTER XVII.

A SCENE OF TERROR.

Every one seemed paralyzed. Mrs. More clasped Milly in her arms and stood as if turned into stone.

"Dey's all runnin' like mad!" cried aunt Selah. "Whar de chile's hat? Gimme de baby! You ain't strong nuff to cahy her, Miss Betty. Oh. Lord! Yere dat!"

There was a long roll like distant thunder, that grew nearer and louder and deepened into a roar. The hotel quivered to its center. The bricks and mortar began to fall in showers.

Marcia seized the child's hat and put it on her. The floors were heaving under their feet. It seemed that no work of human hand could stand that shock.

"Oh, it's fallin' on us!" cried aunt Selah. Let's get out! Let's get out!"

"Hush! You frighten the child," whispered Marcia.

Milly, who could see nothing, clung to her mother in terror.

"What's the matter?" she cried. "What's they runnin' for? What makes the noise? What's shakin' the house?"

"It is a bad storm," said Marcia, soothingly.

"What we goin' out in a storm for?" wailed the child. "Don't want to go out in a storm! Want to stay in the house!"

Mrs. More still stood motionless. The terrible roar that filled the air and the swaying house had stunned her.

"I take lil missy!" cried Selah, taking Milly in her strong arms. "Now, Miss Betty!"

Then Mrs. More roused herself and followed the child. But before they reached the door a new shock sent them all reeling against the wall. It seemed to totter and sway at their touch.

"It's no use!" moaned Mrs. More. "There's no chance! If we do get out we shall be buried in the falling walls!"

"But if we stay, the roof will crush us!" cried Marcia. "Oh, let us try, and trust in God!"

Milly had been terrified into utter silence. Her white face showed her terror She struggled in aunt Selah's arms.

"There, there!" cried aunt Selah, hurrying on. "Aunt Selah will save you, my lamb!"

"Don't want to be saved all alone!" cried the child. "Want mamma and Marcia! Mamma—come!"

The child's voice roused the mother. For one blessed moment the roar ceased and the earth stood still. In the silence, a still, small voice was speaking to that soul.

"God help us!" she prayed.

"Oh, God, I have denied thee! Forgive me! Do not deny us in this hour of peril!"

And they all found themselves in the open air—no one knew how.

On every side rose shrieks and cries of pain and fear. Women wept and prayed Men shouted hoarse cries for help, and even oaths of despair were heard. The whole air was full of stifling white dust from the shattered masonry. Through that dense cloud the gas lights flickered feebly

The light was so faint that they stumbled over piles of fallen bricks, or the telegraph wires that lay in tangled masses on the street.

Through a window near by a sudden light flared. It grew more lurid, and the hoarse cry of "Fire! Fire!" was taken up by the crowd that was surging past.

Through the white mist the flames rose, and showers of sparks fell on other roofs that sent out answering tongues of flames. The fierce light illuminated the pallid, terrified faces of the flying populace. Then came again the low, ominous growl, like the roar of a wild beast as is springs upon its prey.

"Oh, Marcia!" moaned Milly. "I never said my prayers, tonight!"

Mrs. More burst into tears. "Oh, God!" she cried. "I never taught her to pray!"

"Now can I say 'em?" cried Milly, insistently.

"Wait, honey! Dares a heap of people round yeah!" said aunt Selah.

"Must say 'em!" persisted the child shrilly and then she began to cry in a nervous, hysterical manner.

They soothed her at last, but aunt Selah had to sit down on some fallen timb[illegible] they were all trembling, while the child began with the little prayer so lately learned:

"Now I lay me down to sleep

As she ended with:

"If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

she was quiet for a moment, as if reflecting.

"That prayer don't fit," she said, "'cause I ain't a-layin' down to sleep, and I can't die 'fore I wake, 'cause I aint goin, to sleep.' But I don't know any more prayers."

Mrs. More sobbed. "My precious!" she cried, kissing her, "God will hear you and bless you just the same!"

The shattered cornices, coping and fragments of fallen walls were piled up all about them so that it was difficult to make their way. Now and then there was a fall of solid mason work directly in their path, and they were showered with lime, but they escaped the falling bricks as if by a miracle. It seemed to Marcia that the tottering walls on either side must overwhelm them at last. The reverberations still echoed about them and rolled along and swelled and gained force, like the roar of a mighty sea. Whenever a moment's silence came, thanksgiving rose from every heart. The negroes fervently cried out.

"Oh, tank de Lawd!"

"Oh, my blessed Jesus!"

"Oh, it's de night of Solom and Tomorrow!" cried one. "De city of St. Michael is down to de groun'. Pray, my white folks! Why dohn you pray? Look fer de rock of Horeb to be split!"

One group began to sing hymns: "De battle is ober, but de sojers can't rest'"

And another: "De angels is rappin' at de do!" of which the refrain was.

"Oh, tell old Noah to buil' on de Ark,
Buil' on de Ark, buil' on de Ark!"

and they kept on long after the crowd had camped for the night.

Milly seemed charmed with the singing, as if it were a concert gotten up for her entertainment.

"Tell 'em sing some mo'!" she cried.

At one side of the square, stood a tent which had been gayly decorated for some festive occasion In the doorway was a very old colored woman, with a face like a wrinkled persimmon and wool that was snow-white. She was swaying backward dnd forward in silence at first, but suddenly she burst out singing

"Oh, raslin' Jacob, let me go!"

And the whole crowd of negroes joined in the refrain.

They swayed backward and forward just as the old woman did, and clapped their hands in an ecstacy of emotion. At last one man dropped on the ground.

"Tank de Lawd! One soul came through!" cried the ancient mammy.

Then she, too, knelt on the ground, and cried out in an impassioned voice:

"Oh, L[illegible] look on dis ch[illegible] night come, some is alive [illegible] is daid! Oh, we know what de little finger ob de Lawd kin do! We done hear ye in de thunder, good Lord! Oh, my bressed Jesus let de white lion and de brack lamb lie down togedder! Fight de good fight, chillen Fight it out, gal! Fight it out, boy! Oh, yes de time is come! Wake up! Wake up! De lass chance is come to sabe ole Charleston! Oh, my Lawd, dohn touch my city no mo'! I pray God to hole de worl' up! Hole up dis country, Lawd! Fight fer yer lan' folks, with strong pra'rs, and cryin'! Oh, Lawd, tek us in charge dis night! De birds hab nesses, but we got no home dis night! Oh, Lawd, hab mercy!'"

All through the night wailing and singing and prayers went up to Heaven, mingled with the jar and crash of falling houses.

Milly slept at last, while the others watched in fear and trembling. When the little one awakened she seemed dazed.

"I dreamed Uncle Dick was here," she cried. "I want my breakfast, this minute!"

Her shrill little voice seemed to catch the ear of a young man, in gray tweed, who had been searching among the crowd. He strode toward them, and caught the child in his arms. Mrs. More clutched him with a nervous clasp.

"Oh, Dick!" she cried. "How glad—how glad I am!"

"Come!" he cried, "I have been looking for you all night! I went to the hotel first. I have a vehicle here, and we can get away at once"

It seemed like a blissful dream to Marcia, to be driving over the quiet country roads, away from all that din and turmoil—to hear the song of the birds, instead of sobs and shrieks of terror. It seemed strange to see the negroes singing blithely at their work and the cows grazing stolidly in the fields. The perfume of many flowers filled the air. At last the pretty country home of Mrs. More gleamed out whitely, amid embowering trees. The place looked like the garden of Eden to Marcia's aching eyes. But she seemed to look at it all through a faint mist.

"Tank de Lawd, we's still on prayin' groun!" said aunt Selah, fervently.

"The glance of the fires last night must have effected my eyes," thought Marcia, "or else this day is like Indian summer."

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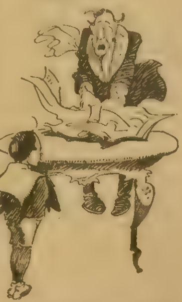

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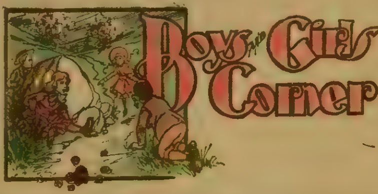

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Or

The Wizard of the North.

By WILL LISENBEE, author of "The Phantom Bicyclist," "Gurlock, the Destroyer," Etc.

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CHAPTER XVI.

THE MARK OF A BULLET.

As soon as Sim Dodson, Dick and Joe were alone together and beyond earshot of the stranger, the former told of his and Dick's trip to the cavern by the lake.

They had but little trouble in discovering the place, and they made a cautious entry, shading the light of their torch as they went, but they found the cavern unoccupied.

The old hunter and the stranger had disappeared. There were signs of occupation and the embers of a fire that had been kindled some time during the day. In one corner was a rude bed of skins and a sort of cupboard made of a pine box containing a supply of dried meat and a few other articles in the way of provisions.

A careful search of the place revealed nothing that would throw any light on the mystery surrounding the two who occupied the place.

"I am confident that this man Huplick is none other than the man I over heard talking to the old hunter," declared Dick. "I don't like the idea of having him among us. And what is to be done?

That is a question that ain't easy to decide," replied Dodson. "As we can prove nothing on him, it seems to be that the best way for us to do is to let him stay among us. Then we can watch him. If he is away, we would not know what devilment he might be up to. I am going to keep an eye on him, and mark my words, I'll catch him a nappin' if he tries any of his games on us."

"I shall also keep my eyes peeled," said Dick. "Meantime, what do you think of pulling out from here?"

"I have been thinkin' that question over an' my idea it to start from the island about one o'clock in the mornin'. By daylight we can be a good many miles on our way an' out of the way of the band of redskins that has bin hangin' around here. It is safer to travel by night than by day just now."

About twelve o'clock they quietly got their effects aboard the boat and began the journey down the river.

Mrs. Martin was made comfortable in the cuddy, and with a sigh of infinite relief she took her place on the rude couch prepared for her.

As for Dick and Joe, they were glad enough to be on their way home again, and thankful to be away from the scene of so many startling adventures.

The only thing that marred their happiness now, was the presence of Huplick, who might prove a most dangerous foe.

By daylight they were far away from the scene of their adventures, but no halt was made till nearly noon, when they stopped on a small rocky headland that jutted out into the river, and putting the boat ashore, cooked enough to last them the rest of the day.

As the place was well fortified against any attack that might be made by the prowling Sioux, it was thought best to remain here for a short time and allow the mule to feed on the rich grass, as they carried no feed with them.

While the others were kindling a fire and attending to the cooking, Dick led the mule ashore and picketed it at the edge of the woods that bordered the river.

Having been advised to watch the animal, lest some Indian should steal it, Dick threw himself on the soft carpet of grass close by and lay there looking at the fleecy clouds that sailed lazily across the blue of the sky.

His mind went back to the day he had set out from home, when he had told his mother good bye and had started up the river on the journey that was to prove so eventful. He felt so thankful that she was safe in the block house and out of danger of the murderous redskins that were infesting the country.

Despite the adventures that had beset the little party of bee hunters, the enterprise had proved a profitable one, and they were now on their return with the boat fairly loaded with honey. And the work had been done at a time when there was little else to be done on the farm.

While he lay thus, he saw Huplick cross the strip of sand lying between the headland and the forest and disappear among the trees. He carried a rifle and was evidently looking for some kind of game, but Dick was suspicious of the man. He might be up to some game. Dick had not forgotten that this might be the man who was planning to have him murdered, and fearing that another attempt might be made on his life, he arose hastily, and pulling off his coat and hat, threw them in the grass where he had been lying. Then he darted into the brush and hurried in pursuit of Huplick.

He had taken but a few steps when he saw the stranger walking rapidly through the woods. Dick was very careful not to be seen, yet he was determined to keep a watch on the man and satisfy himself as to whether he was up to some game or not.

He continued his walk till an eight of a mile from the river, then he came to a halt and examined his rifle carefully. When this was done he took a careful survey about him with the evident purpose of satisfying himself that his movements were not observed by any one.

Dick also stopped and concealing himself behind a dense thicket, watched with intense interest.

Having assured himself that his movements were not spied on by any one, he started back in the direction of the river. Dick, keeping out of sight behind bush and thicket, followed, watching every movement.

That the man was up to some villainy, Dick had not the slightest doubt, but just what it was, remained yet to be proved.

As Huplick drew near the river he became more cautious in his movements, and crouching low among the bushes, he kept a sharp lookout for any one that might be lurking near.

Arriving near the edge of the woods, he paused behind a tree and cast a searching glance in the direction of the river. Then slowly raising his rifle, he leveled it directly at the spot where Dick had been lying and fired. Then he did a remarkable thing. Drawing his pistol from his belt, he began to discharge it rapidly in the air, running as he did so, toward the river, and now and then throwing his pistol over his shoulder and firing as he ran.

In breathless haste he dashed into the rocky headland, yelling as he came.

"Indians! Indians!" he cried, "The red devils are after me! Let every one to arms!"

In a moment, Peter Mertz and Joe grasped their arms and stood ready to repel an attack.

Dick had barely time to note this, when he heard a voice at his side, and turning, saw Dodson within a rod of him.

"Come this way, my boy," he said, "and be quick."

As he spoke he ran down to the river, Dick coming close behind.

A hundred yards below he came to a halt and stood waiting for Dick to come up.

"By Jenks! you played that chap a neat trick!" he cried. "So you were on to his game? Good for you! So was I, an' now I reckon we have got him where we want him! Don't say a word about what we have discovered, an' leave it all to me. Now let us run for the camp an' act jist like we thought all the Sioux in the nation was after us!"

With this he darted in the direction of the camp, followed close behind by Dick.

As they passed where Dick's hat and coat were lying, Dick took them up and ran on to the camp, where everything was in confusion and every one on the alert.

Both Dodson and Dick, from all appearances, were as much excited as the rest, and put themselves in readiness for the attack.

"Gee whiz! but I'm glad you got in in time!" cried Joe, who knew nothing of the game Dick and Dodson were playing, as he crouched by Dick's side behind the rocky headland.

To this Dick made no reply, for his mind was too busy with something else—something which Dodson also noticed. Dodson nodded with firmly set lips as he saw it and Dick felt a sudden faintness as he realized the danger that had threatened him.

What was it that had so agitated the two?

It was a bullet hole in the center of Dick's hat!

CHAPTER XVII.

DICK AND THE PRISONER.

There was not the slightest doubt in Dick's mind now, that all his suspicions regarding Huplick were correct. That he had attempted to take the life of the youth was

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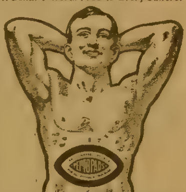

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evident. It was a cunning plan. By making believe he had been attacked by Indians, and that the Indians were firing at him as he ran into the camp, would have removed all suspicion of foul play, had he succeeded in his murderous design, had not Dodson and Dick been on the alert and suspected that he was up to some villainy.

There was a dangerous glitter in the eye of Dodson as he looked at the mark of the bullet in Dick's hat.

"I ain't goin' to give him any chance to do any furtner devilment," Dodson whispered to Dick, as he pressed close to his side. "We got him nailed now, an' we'll put him where he won't be likely to harm any one."

Meantime, Huplick was playing his part well, though there was a puzzled look on his face, for it was evident that he was at a loss to understand why it was that his unintended victim had cheated him, and there lurked in his mind a suspicion that his motive might have been suspected.

This made him a little uneasy, but he played his part well, and pretended to be greatly excited over the Indians' attack.

But as the moments went by and no savages appeared, he began to discuss the advisability of resuming their journey.

He suggested that it might be the best to remain where they were till nightfall, but to this Dodson entered an objection, and presently gave orders for the traps to ge put aboard and the journey down the river resumed.

As soon as they were under way, Dodson made a signal to Dick and Joe, and then drawing his pistol, leveled it at the head of Huplick.

"I reckon your little game is about up," he said. "Throw up your hands or I'll blow a hole in you!"

With a look of utter amazement he obeyed, for there was something in the face of Dodson that told him that it would not be safe to stop to argue the case.

"Now, boys," said Dodson, still keeping his pistol leveled at the stranger, "get some rope there in the cuddy and tie this chap up so he won't get loose."

"Why, what the Sam Hill does this outrage mean?" cried Huplick, trying to brave the matter out. "Are you all gone crazy?"

"You know well enough what it means," replied Dodson. "I'm goin' to hand you over to the law when I git back an' see what it can do for you."

Meantime, Dick and Joe had leaped forward and bound the prisoner with strong cords.

"For the land's sake!" cried Mrs. Martin, holding up her hands in horror. "What has the wretch bin doin'?"

"That Indian scare was all a hoax," said Dodson. "It was a little plan this feller got up so that he might commit murder."

"Murder!" gasped Mrs. Martin. "Who was he wantin' to murder? Not me I hope!"

"It was Dick there," said Dodson.

"My good man," said Huplick, paling a little at the words, "You astonish me more than I can tell. I am utterly amazed that you should suspect me of such a deed. What on earth—what object could I have in desiring to injure a youth I had never seen till yesterday."

"That is just what's bin puzzlin' us all," remarked Dodson. "But we are goin' to find out."

"Py shimminy, dot vos like some grant opera," cried Peter, a look of utter amazement coming over his face. "If somepody vos sing now and der pand vould blay I vould feel like I vos paid fife dollars and der play vos shust begin."

"I shall have you arrested for this high handed work!" cried Huplick, "and if there is any law in the state I will see if it permits an innocent man to be thus treated."

"All right," nodded Dodson. "You will get all the law you want."

"But this is absurd—outrageous," persisted Huplick. "You ought to know that you are mistaken. I would not harm a hair on that boy's head for the world."

"Oh, well, I don't care to talk of the matter," said Dodson.

"But you don't aim to keep me bound in this outrageous manner till you get home?"

"Yes."

"But I have got important business to attend to, and if you keep me a prisoner it will go hard with you."

"I can't help it."

"But you must help it. I know that your absurd charges might give me some trouble, as I am a stranger in this country, but you have nothing to gain."

"We will see about that. I mean to protect this boy."

"Don't be absurd. You ought to know well enough that I did not try to harm him. It is foolish to think so. Ask him if I could have any reason for doing so."

As he spoke he turned his gaze on Dick.

"I reckon there is only one way to stop his talk, an' that is to tell him how much we know," broke in Dodson. "Dick, tell him all you told me and see what he has to say."

Dick looked straight into Huplick's face and asked:

"Do you remember being with an old old hunter by the name of Mark Huber, the other day?"

"I never heard of such a person in my life," declared Huplick.

"All right," replied Dick. "But let me go on. I met the old trapper and he took me to his cabin, and before I knew what he was up to, he grabbed me and threw me into a cellar."

"Well, what have I got to do with that?"

"He locked me in," went on Dick, ignoring the question and keeping his gaze fixed on Huplick, "and left me there. The Indians came to the cabin and set fire to it. Mr. Mertz happened along and rescued me. That night, while I was lost in the woods I came to a small lake where I found our boat which had been stolen the night before. While there I heard some one talking and pretty soon Mark Huber, the old trapper came up and there was a stranger with him. I was hidden in the thicket and I overheard all they said. Why do you want to hire Huber to kill me?"

Dick asked the question suddenly, fixing a searching gaze on the man.

For once, Huplick lost his presence of mind. His face paled, and for a moment a frightened look came over his countenance. But he was quick to recover himself.

"Why don't you go on with your story?" he asked, mockingly.

"Very well," said Dick. "I heard the man who was with Huber offer a large reward if he could be furnished evidence that I had been burned to death in the cabin cellar."

Dick paused again.

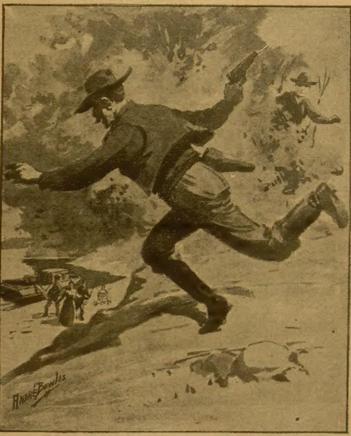
"A very thrilling little story," remarked Huplick. "but the installments are too short. Why don't you go on?"

Dick was taken a little aback. He was quite sure that Huplick would betray himself at the climax, and the cool rejoinder of the man dissapointed his expectations.

Huplick saw this and grew more confident.

"Do go on," he urged. "I am very anxious to learn how you came out of your adventures."

"When you came to the island the next day," went on Dick, "it soon struck me that you were the same man who had been talking to Huber, and your voice finally so far convinced me that I was right, that I thought it best to watch you. That is how



"Indians! Indians!" he cried.

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I came to leave my coat and hat in the grass where I was laying today when you went into the woods. That is how it happened that both Mr. Dodson and myself witnessed your little game. How you fired and shot a hole in my hat—thinking I was still there, and then discharged your pistol several times in the air to make believe that the Indians had attacked you. That is why you are now a prisoner and will be handed over to the proper authorities when we get home."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PAIR OF VILLAINS.

"A very nice little story," commented Huplick, "but one, I'm afraid, that few people will believe. I think I shall have a little something to say when we get before the magistrate. It is hardly worth our while to discuss the matter further."

He relapsed into silence and turned his attention to the scenery along the shore, gazing lazily at the hills that rose beyond the gaily colored maples that skirted the river.

The day passed without further adventure, and as the sun was near the horizon the boat was put ashore.

"This is about as good a place as we can find to pass the night," Dodson said. "There is some bad places in the river below here and it ain't goin' to pay us to take any chances of runnin' into a snag."

Dodson released Huplick from his bonds for a while so that the prisoner might eat his supper, and as they ate, Peter Mertz regaled the party with narratives of his adventures on the plains.

It was almost dark when supper was finished, and then a most suprising thing happened.

Mrs. Martin, who had been the first to rise, walked by the place where Huplick sat, and with a quick movement thrust a pistol into his hand. The next moment she stood leveling another at the head of Dodson.

"If any one mecks a move thar'll be blood shed," she said, and even as she spoke, Huplick was on his feet and followed her example, the two standing side by side, their pistols pointing at the party of four at the table.

To say that they were completely taken by surprise, would be to use a mild expression. They were thunderstruck.

A low laugh came from Huplick.

"I am very sorry to turn the tables on you," he said, "but it is the only way to get you to listen to reason. I am glad to find that Mrs. Martin is not so stubborn in that respect. I could easily take revenge on you for what you have done, but I can afford to be generous. I hold no enmity and before I take my departure I want to thank you for your hospitality."

"Don't mention it," said Dodson, smiling in spite of himself at the ludicrous turn affairs had taken. "When I am outwitted by a woman I lay down my hand and have nothing to say."

Huplick laughed.

"You are not the first that has been a woman's victim," he said. "More than half the men who marry can understand how to sympathize with you. Now we must bid you good bye. I say we, for since there might be a strained relation between her and you, since she has seen fit to sympathize with me, I shall ask her to accompany me."

And so saying, he backed into the shadows, followed by the woman, and the next instant the blackness of the night had swallowed them up.

The pair walked rapidly, and it must be admitted that Mrs. Martin, for a woman who had rheumatism, was excedingly agile.

They spoke not a word till they were well away from the camp, and then they came to a halt.

Huplick seated himself on a log, while his companion proceeded to remove the gown that enveloped her stout form. This might seem a rather odd manoeuvre, but it will not seem so much so when we observe that when the garment was removed, it revealed the garb of a man beneath. A cap was produced from a pocket and the familiar form of Mark Huber, the old trapper was revealed.

"Now I fell more like myself," he declared. "By cracky, I don't know how a woman ever gits through life in sich garments. A frock is a powerful unhandy thing, but I've found them old ones of Mandy's come mighty handy when I am out on a little masquerade."

"Well, it served us a good turn this time," remrked Huplick, who was, as the reader has already guessed, none other than the crafty villain, Clinton Armstrong. "But the deuce take it, we have made an ugly mess of the whole business."

"Mebby not."

"That is the way it looks to me."

"But there is plenty of time to do the business."

"Plenty of time there may be, but how are we to go about it and not leave suspicion hanging over us?"

The old trapper snapped his fingers.

"What do we care for suspicion?" he asked. "That feller Dodson ner any of the rest know who we are. They could not tell if they had to die, anything about us. Then if we go about it right, there need be no suspicion that will prove anything."

"I guess you are right; but what plan have you evolved?"

"I have thought of a number of ways it might be done—this gittin' away with the boy."

"Go on."

"You know that the redskins is thicker 'an hair on a dog's back in these regions, an' nothin' could be more natural than that some band of 'em should take a shot at the people in a boat goin' down the river."

"I see."

"An' now what is to keep us from droppin' a few miles down the river; wait there till mornin', an' when the boat comes by git a good bead on the boy an' the work is done! It is true they might say we did it, but they wouldn't know who we is, and could prove nothin' if they did."

"By George! your idea is not so bad!" cried Armstrong.

"It is the best we can do now."

"It looks that way. But blame it, we might have made a fine coup if we hadn't made a mess of things to start with."

"Who made the mess? Not I."

"I know you didn't."

"If you had kept away from the island I would have fixed things all right."

"How could you?"

"By chuckin' the boy into the river when nobody was about."

"Well, I did not like that way of doing the job, as I told you."

"That's it. You was afraid there might be some difficulty of provin' the boy was dead."

"That was my point exactly. When he is gotten rid of we must prove it before it will benefit my client."

"Well, you hain't got no better proof by lettin' him git away."

"That's a melancholy fact," replied Armstrong.

"But as I said before, it ain't too late yit. We can find a good place down the river an' wait fer 'em. Meantime, we can rig ourselves out like redskins. We can knock over a wild turkey, a hawk or some other bird an' git some feathers fer our head dress, then a little red ochre will do the rest. We'll manage ter let the fellers in the boat git a glimpse at us, an' when the work is done they'll be our witnesses that it was the redskins that did it."

"By George, you are a genius!" cried Armstrong. "The plan will work like a die, and no one will be the wiser."

"Then we'd better be travelin'."

"That's right."

"We must go at least ten miles down the river. Thar's a big bend here an' we can cut off the distance by cuttin' straight across."

"Excellent! Everything will work out all right yet if we make no mistake, and then for our reward."

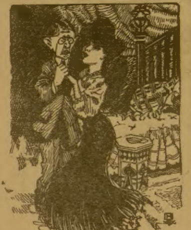
The two men set out at a rapid walk, pushing eagerly through the interlacing foliage of the brush.

Armstrong felt exultant. He was sure now that the plan they had laid would not fail and he was anxious to put it into execution.

"I've bin trampin' about the woods fer many a day an' layin' up nothin'," remarked Huber, as the two pushed on their way, "but I reckon my days of hardship is perty nigh over. Let me git that reward an' I'll settle down an' take my ease."

This very interesting story will be brought to a conclusion in next week's Ledger. It will be followed by a rattling good story called The Boy Chums of Hickory Bend. Any new subscriber or any one renewing a subscription is entitled to the Ledger's free cameras or patterns as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen. Do not wait. If your subscription has expired renew it at once before the paper is stopped. Thousands have renewed their subscriptions during the last month; we have also received thousands of entirely new subscribers. Now is the time, do not delay.

Horrible Premonition.



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Harold—Oh, darling, you don't mean to tell me that you are going to do the cooking!

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Parting of Peace.

The woman with the yellow curl papers still entwined in her hair mounted an upturned tub and handed a small package over the whitewashed fence.

"Here is a cake of home-made soap," she said, sweetly. "I made it myself after an old recipe handed down by my grandmother."

"Thanks, ever so much," responded the woman in the red shawl.

"Yes, I consider it far superior to the brands of soap they sell to-day. Just try it on your children's ears. It is just grand for scrubbing soiled ears and—"

But the woman in the red shawl was looking daggers.

"What?" she exploded. "Do you mean to insinuate that my children have soiled ears? Do you?"

"I—er—that is—"

"Oh, it is no use trying to apologize. You are always insulting people. Keep your old soap."

◆

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Grafting the breadfruit and cherry tree to produce a cherry tart.

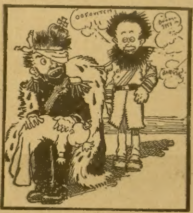
Joining the cantaloupe vine, the rubber plant and the pokeweed so that each cantaloupe will bear the indellible stamp telling whether or not it is ripe.

Grafting the five-fingered ivy to the potato vine so that in the fall the potatoes may rub their own eyes off.

Blending the quaking aspen and the milkweed so that the result will be a plant which will churn butter of its own sap.

◆

Nick's Little Joke.



Duke Vladimir—Yes, your majesty, a nihilist attempted to blow you up with a bomb.

Czar Nicholas—Trying to raise the old Nick, eh?

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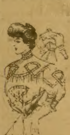
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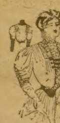
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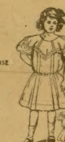
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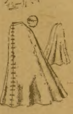
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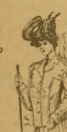
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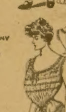
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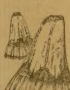
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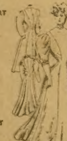
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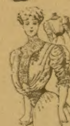
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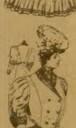
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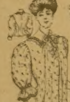
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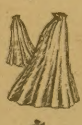
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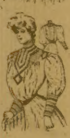
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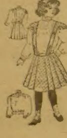
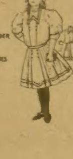

5281 GIRL'S SUSPENDER DRESS WITH GUIMPE 6 TO 12 YEARS


5307 GIRL'S COSTUME 8 TO 14 YEARS

HABIT-FORMING MEDICINES AND DRUGS.

Whatever may be the fact as to many of the so-called patent medicines containing injurious ingredients as broadly published in some journals of more or less influence, this publicity has certainly been of great benefit in arousing needed attention to this subject. It has, in a considerable measure, resulted in the most intelligent people avoiding such foods and medicines as may be fairly suspected of containing the injurious ingredients complained of. Recognizing this fact some time ago, Dr. Pierce, of Buffalo, N. Y., "took time by the forelock," as it were, and published broadcast all the ingredients of which his popular medicines are composed. Thus he has completely forestalled all harping critics and all opposition that might otherwise be urged against his medicines, because they are NOW OF KNOWN COMPOSITION. Furthermore, from the formula printed on every bottle wrapper, it will be seen that these medicines contain no alcohol or other habit-forming drugs. Neither do they contain any narcotics or injurious agents, their ingredients being purely vegetable, extracted from the roots of medicinal plants found growing in the depths of our American forests and of well recognized curative virtues.

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By reading the writings of these eminent medical men contained in the little booklet recently compiled by Dr. R. V. Pierce, of Buffalo, N. Y., which will be sent *free*, on request by postal card or letter, addressed to him, as above, the reader will find that all the several native, medicinal roots entering into the "Golden Medical Discovery," as also into Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, for woman's weaknesses and peculiar ailments, are very highly recommended and praised as cures for diseases for which Dr. Pierce advises these famous medicines of his preparation.

Dr. Ellingwood says of Golden Seal root, which is an important ingredient in both "Favorite Prescription" and "Golden Medical Discovery," "It is an important remedy in disorders of the womb." He continues: "In all catarrhal conditions, especially in flabby, muscular relaxation and general enfeeblement, it is useful." Prof. Scudder, late of Cincinnati, says of Golden Seal root, in relation to its general effect on the system, "*there is no medicine in use about which there is such general unanimity of opinion.* It is *universally* regarded as *the* tonic, useful in all debilitated states." Dr. Bartholow says that Golden Seal root is "valuable in uterine hemorrhage (bleeding), hemorrhagia (flooding) and congestive dysmenorrhoea) painful menstruation)."

Prof. John King, author of the AMERICAN DISPENSATORY, says of Black Cohosh root, another ingredient of "Favorite Prescription," "in dysmenorrhoea (painful periods), it is surpassed by no other drug, being of the greatest utility in irritative and congestive conditions of the uterus and appendages characterized by tensive, dragging pains resembling the pains of rheumatism." He continues: "It is a good remedy for the reflex (side aches) of unmarried women." He also recommends it for uterine leucorrhoea, also for sterility. He further says, "its action is slow, *but its effects are permanent.*" He also recommends this agent for St. Vitus's dance, also for many rheumatic conditions, as does also Hobart A. Hare., M. D., professor in the Med. Dept., University of Pa. Other agents entering into the "Favorite Prescription" are equally praised in the little book of extracts from prominent medical authors whose published works are consulted by physicians of all the several schools to guide them in prescribing.

"Golden Medical Discovery" as also Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription may be relied upon to cure all the diseases and more than all that their several ingredients are represented as curing, by the above eminent physicians, for they are so compounded that each ingredient acts in harmony with all the others, and also enhances their curative action. They may be taken conjointly in alternate doses with great advantage.

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Selling the

BLADE *and* LEDGER

I want a boy in every town to act as agent for the BLADE and LEDGER. I will send you a bundle of papers. You sell them and keep 2 cents out of each nickle you take in. You do not pay for unsold papers.

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS I want you to send me your name and I will send you a bundle of papers, agent's certificate, report blanks, envelopes and full instructions. No experience is necessary. I will guarantee that you can make a nice sum each week without taking any chances.

NO MONEY REQUIRED I will send full instructions so that you can begin at once. All I ask you to do now is to send me your name and address on the blank below.

CUT OUT HERE

W. D. BOYCE, Boyce Building, CHICAGO, ILL.

Dear Sir:—I would like to act as your agent. You may send me a bundle of papers, agent's outfit and full instructions. I will agree to try and sell these papers and to pay you for all I sell, less my commission. I agree to report every week.

I take the agency with the understanding that I am not to pay for any unsold papers.

Name……………………………………

Street or P.O. Box……………………………………

Town……………………… *State*………………………

FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

MISS ELEPHANT'S DEBUT

Miss Elephant's coming-out ball,
In her palm-tree-bedecked dancing hall
Was as curious a sight,
On a midsummer night,
As e'er on your vision might fall.

Her friends of all animal land,
She had asked to be surely on hand;
But so early they came,
To their very great shame,
They got there ahead of the band.

But, striving politely to please,
Miss Elephant set them at ease.
"If some one can play,
We will waltz right away,
Though our hand organ has a bad wheeze."

Then did Mr. Orang-outang cry,
"Now, really, you all are too shy;
I can grind but one tune,
For I'm but a baboon,
But I'l play, since no others will try."

"Let's begin! There's no time to lose!"
Then a relative each one did choose.
'Twas really most strange
How they did it arrange,
But no lady to dance did refuse.

The Hippopotamus' tread was not light,
The Rhinoceros' step was a sight,
While the Elephant's time
Was almost a crime;
But in dancing they all took delight.

As the Ostriches hopped left and right,
"What a blessing we have a fine night,
For damp, rainy weather
Would uncurl our feather,"
Cried Miss Ostrich, "and make me a fright."

The Giraffes held their heads very high
As they glided majestically by;
While Sir Antelope flew
With his kin, Miss Koodoo,
Round and round till their horns went awry.

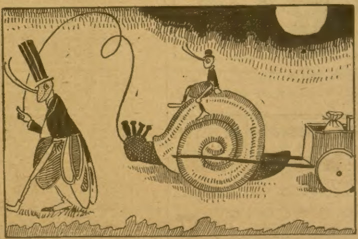
"Such a beautiful ball we ne'er knew!"
Cried the guests as they made their adieu.
"With music so grand,
We did not miss the band;
Now, Miss Elephant, really, that's true."

The Orang Outang sniffed. "Well you may
Think this ball was delightfully gay;
But please understand
That I've lamed my hand,
And have learned that good nature don't pay."

A Depraved Bootblack.

A French paper tells the following story of a bootblack's depravity: "One day, as a gentleman was walking over a bridge in Paris, a dirty poodle came up behind him and rolled itself deliberately over his clean boots, making them in a great mess. Luckily, there was a shoeblack close at hand, so he had his boots polished again and walked on. The next day he happened to be walking over the same bridge, with clean boots as before, when the same poodle ran and rolled itself in a puddle, and then came and rubbed itself against his boots; and again he naturally went to the shoeblack to have them cleaned. It struck him as rather strange that the animal should rub up against him twice, so he thought he would watch the dog. He saw that this clever poodle attentively noticed the people who came over the bridge, and whenever he perceived one with especially clean boots he would rush up to him and roll his dirty body against the boots, and the wearer would thereupon go to the same bootblack to have them polished. This wicked shoeblack had taught the dog to behave in this way in order to increase his custom, and the dog had taken very kindly to these dishonest courses."

THE BALKY SNAIL MARE.



When papa Bugg went up to town
To buy provisions there,
Or else to get a suit of clothes
Or other things to wear,
He harnessed up his old snail mare
Although she was so slow,
And took a horse hair whip along
To make the creature go.

One summer day he started out
And Willie Bugg went too.
He rode astride the sail mare's shell,
As bugglets love to do.
But the old snail mare balked at this,
And, full of bitter rage,
Refused to move a step until
The Buggs died from old age.

A Paper Doll Party.

If some little girl is thinking of inviting her girl friends in for an afternoon entertainment a paper doll affair will prove most original and amusing. When you invite the girls tell them each to bring a pair of scissors.

When all have arrived seat them at sewing tables and allow them to choose from the colored fashion plates the dress each likes best. Heads all ready must be cut from advertisements, so all the children will have to do is to cut out the dresses. Tissue paper, lace paper and all sorts of odds and ends of gilt and silver paper are placed on the sewing tables, and with jars of library paste a happy hour will follow. Simple prizes, such as a pair of scissors or a paper doll outfit, will prove satisfactory.

One mother who employed this party to entertain twenty little girls declared that she never gave a party which was so little trouble or gave so much pleasure. Perhaps the reason is that the secret of making children as well as grown people happy is to keep them busy.

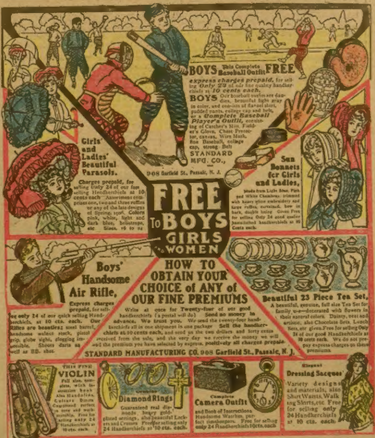
A Siege Game.

The children are divided into two parties of equal numbers. One party gathers anywhere where the ground is a little higher than the surrounding ground, and there all of this first party form a circle with their backs together, while in the middle is the leader with a flag.

The second party must storm the fort. This is done by rushing up to the first party and seizing the players there in the attempt to drag them out of the circle and down the hill. Whoever is dragged a certain distance agreed on beforehand is considered a prisoner. The players who are holding the fort also try to make prisoners, and if they succeed in holding any of the storming party they keep them. The game continues till one of the two parties has lost so many players in prisoners that further attempts would be in vain.

THE WUMPTIES CALL.

The Wumpty Band, one moonlight night,
Were basking in that orb's bright light.
When one more tireless than the rest
Suggested that they don their best
And sally forth to find some sport,
"Aye, aye!" there came the loud retort.
Say, comrades, let's invade the zoo,
and see if there is aught to do.
We'll don our best, present our cards
And give the beasts our best regards."
So at the magic midnight peal
They tapped upon the cages' steel.
"Am I at home?" the lion roared,
"Come in and see!" The lion pawed
So savagely the Wumpty Bumps
Made several frantic backward jumps;
But after they had talked awhile,
They tapped again with cheery smile.
No wonder, for a fairy charm
Protected every one from harm.
Was that the lion lolling there—
That little thing with yellow hair?
Was that the tiger, flashing-eyed,
That kitten striving hard to hide?
Yes; for the band had made them small
So each gay elf might safely call.
A tiny panther chased his tail;
An elephant turned deadly pale
Because a cat had passed that way;
A rabbit held a bear at bay.
From cage to cage the Wumpties went
Until the night was nearly spent.
One took the hippo on his knee
And chatted with him pleasantly;
Another stroked the leopard till
He purred as any tabby will;
While others made a merry fuss
Around the shy rhinoceros.
The lion said in accents low:
"Please close my door before you go;
I'm such a timid little soul
Some dog might make my cage his goal."
The tiger, he was timid, too,
And trembled when a rooster crew,
Indeed, to every cage they went
With pleasant wish and compliment,
Until a straggling ray of dawn
Proclaimed the coming of the morn.
Then, shouting loud, the leader cried:
"Quick! Hasten, brothers! Get outside!
The day is here, our spell is o'er."
And through the zoo arose a roar
Which told—no need of vague surmise—
The beasts had all regained their size.
"Good luck, dear beasts," so called the band,
And, chuckling, left for Wumptyland.



BOYS This Complete Baseball Outfit FREE express charges prepaid, for selling Only 24 of our fine quality handkerchiefs at 10 cents each.

BOYS Our baseball outfits are dandies, beautiful light gray in color, and consists of flannel shirt, padded pants, college cap and belt, or a Complete Baseball Player's Outfit, consisting of Catcher's Mitt, Fielder's Glove, Chest Protector, canvas, Wire Mask, fine Baseball, college cap, strong Belt STANDARD MFG. CO., 908 Garfield St., Passaic, N. J.

Girls' and Ladies' Beautiful Parasols. Charges prepaid, for selling Only 24 of our fast selling Handkerchiefs at 10 cents each. Assortment comprises one, two and three ruffles or any of the late designs of Spring, [illegible]. Colors pink, white, light and dark blue, heliotrope, etc. Sizes, 16 to 24.

Sun Bonnets for Girls and Ladies, Made from Light Blue, Pink and White Chambray, trimmed with heavy white embroidery and large ruffles, curtained, bow in back, double lining. Given Free for selling Only 24 good quality hemstitched handkerchiefs at 10 Cents each.

FREE To BOYS GIRLS AND WOMEN

HOW TO OBTAIN YOUR CHOICE of ANY of OUR FINE PREMIUMS

Write at once for Twenty-four of our good handkerchiefs (a postal will do) Send no money in advance. We trust you. We send the twenty-four handkerchiefs all in one shipment in one package Sell the handkerchiefs at 10 cents each, and send us the two dollars and forty cents received from the sale, and the very day we receive the money we will send the premium you have selected by express, positively all charges prepaid.

STANDARD MANUFACTURING CO. 908 Garfield St., Passaic, N. J.

Boys' Handsome Air Rifle, Express charges prepaid, for selling only 24 of our quick selling Handkerchiefs, at 10 cts. each. Our Rifles are beauties; steel barrel, handsome walnut stock, pistol grip, globe sights, clogging impossible. Shoots darts as well as BB. shot.

Beautiful 23 Piece Tea Set, A beautiful, genuine, full size Tea Set for family use—decorated with flowers in their natural colors. Dainty, neat and artistic, also Chocolate Sets, Lunch Sets, etc. given Free for selling Only 24 of our good Handkerchiefs at 10 cents each. We do not prepay express charges on these premiums.

This Fine VIOLIN Full size, complete, with instruction book. Also Mandolins, Guitars, Drums, Graphophones, perfect in tone and workmanship. Free for selling only 24 Handkerchiefs at 10 cts. each.

Genuine Diamond Rings Guaranteed real diamonds, heavy gold-plated settings, also beautiful Lockets and Crosses. Free for selling only 24 Handkerchiefs at 10 cts. each.

Complete Camera Outfit and Book of Instructions. Handsome Watches, perfect timekeepers. Free for selling only 24 Handkerchiefs 10cts. each

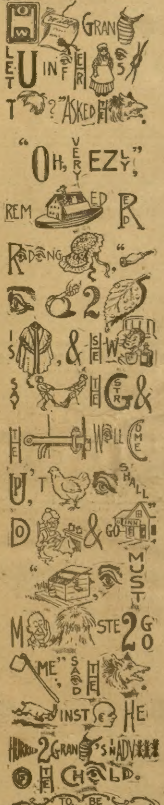
Elegant Dressing Sacques Variety designs and materials, also Shirt Waists, Walking Skirts, etc. Free for selling only 24 Handkerchiefs at 10 cts. each.

When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger.

When Writing Mention Chicago Ledger.

CAN YOU READ THIS STORY OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD?

CHAPTER VII



TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK WITH SOLUTION OF CHAP. VII

Solution of Chapter VI.

"Is there any meat in the basket?" asked the wolf, putting his nose to the side of the basket.

"Oh, no! Granny doesn't care for that."

"I suppose she has no teeth, then?"

"I don't know," replied Red Riding Hood, innocently. "It has been so long since I have seen her that I forget."

The wolf was thinking that he would have to eat pretty soon, and he thought toothless Granny would be easy prey.

His Definition.

"Jackey, what is the definition of nothing?" asked the teacher.

It's what you say when your're up to some mischief and your mother asks you real sharp: 'John, what are you doing?' "

Fire Alarm in Church.

A fire alarm is to be placed in the Reformed Church at Pittsburg, Pa., so that firemen may attend services and at the same time know of a fire should one occur while they are away from their quarters.